MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

Contents

Magic by Misdirection

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INTRODUCTION

When a magician steps out in front of an audience, lie does so as an entertainer. The fact that he is a magician is entirely secondary, from the viewpoint of his spectators. While it is true that the audience may be there because he is a magician, it is even more true that his spectators are there because they expect to be entertained-entertained by magic. Very frequently even this is not true. Many times the audience is there to be *entertained*, without consideration being given as to the particular kind of entertainment. Most frequently, perhaps, the magician is merely one of several types of entertainers.

Thus *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS* attempts to cover what I believe to be the most important field for the performing magician. It is intended to help the magician to prepare his performance so that it will be most palatable for his spectators.

To some, this may seem as if the cart were before the horse. At first thought it might seem more logical to start with the mechanics of magic. It might be argued that before you can have an entertaining magician, you must have a magician.

I choose the opposite viewpoint. I select this stand because I feel the performer must be an entertainer first. That is essential, in my opinion. Entertainment considerations must far outweigh the particular kind of performance the entertainer may elect to give.

Still under the head of showmanship, the particular vehicle having been selected, the entertainer must give consideration as to how his offering may be adapted for maximum entertainment results. This must be taken, always, *from the viewpoint of the spectator*.

After all of these important factors have been provided, then the entertainer becomes the magician.

The next step, it would seem, should be a thorough study of the mechanics of the particular entertainment field selected-in this case magic. *THE TRICK BRAIN* is intended to provide the basis for this second phase.

It seeks to uncover the mechanics of magic. Through a thorough discussion of the basic effects and the mechanical means through which they may be accomplished, a general foundation in the elements of the mechanics of magic is made available.

But a secondary purpose is also accomplished. The trick invention feature, I must continue to insist, is auxiliary to the fundamental idea. Yet it is important from the entertainment viewpoint.

Original tricks are important in the entertainment field because psychologically they should fit the personalities of their inventors. Really we don't need any more new tricks-as tricks. We have thousands now that we can never use. There are other thousands that should never be presented.

But we do need more tricks fitting the specific personalities of the individual performers themselves. This calls for new tricks. They must be new because the usual stock tricks-even the classics, so-called-are general. They are fitted to no particular personality. They are not suitable for all performers. In fact, many classics, like *The Linking Rings, The Multiplying Billiard Balls, The Egg Bag, The Thirty Card Trick, The Cups and Balls*, and many others, do not fit *all* magicians. Many magicians, skillful enough themselves, cannot perform some or all of them because they are out of keeping with that particular performer's style, personality, attack and other characteristics.

Technically, they may be able to execute many of them-or even all. But when these magicians attempt them in public, they fail to get maximum results because of something discordant or inconsonant in the combination of man and trick. To the degree that a magician fits the pattern of performers who have been successful with the classics, he will be successful with them.

But this is not advantageous to the individual magician. It forces him to conform to the common mold. It is only reasonable to assume from this that he loses individuality in the process.

Tricks that are tailor-made to the individual magician obviously should be best for him. Common logic should reveal this.

I realize that all magicians cannot be inventors. Some lack certain qualifications. Others are essentially performers, not inventors. Yet an understanding of the fundamentals of invention will help the individual performer to shape his magic in such a way that it may fit him best. This shaping may be in the details of method. It may be in the objects with which the trick is done. Or it may even be in the general effect. There are so many considerations that enter into the matter that discussion is difficult.

To emphasize that the classics have not been found suitable for all performers, let me cite a few cases: Of the list enumerated above I never saw Thurston perform any of them in public. Neither can I

remember Blackstone using them in his program. Dante has used the billiard ball trick. Frakson features the ring trick. Cardini does a version of the billiard ball trick, but not the classic method. And recent performers of *The Cups and Balls* have varied it, as will be recalled in the performances of Gali-Gali, Scarne, Albenice and many, many others.

If you will review the programs of the various good magicians you have seen, you will find, I am certain, the classics have appeared only occasionally in, the individual performances, sometimes not at all, and often with marked variation in routine or method.

Even the slightest variation requires some degree of invention, however small.

The invention feature of *THE TRICK BRAIN* supplies material of value because it adds novelty to the general repertoire of magic.

In commenting on *THE TRICK BRAIN*, some reviewers observed that the mechanical invention feature lacks an essential spark of life. Most readily, it is agreed that there is no spark of life. But I take the position that NO trick in itself has any spark of life. It doesn't get life until the essential spark is supplied by the performer *during the actual performance*.

Again, other comments questioned the product of the trick invention feature. They questioned the value of the tricks so developed. They asked if tricks thus conceived would have that mark of greatness that is revealed by the classics.

First, I quarrel with the idea that any trick in itself is great. In my belief, tricks are only great because of greatness given them through great *performances*. I feel that these tricks we term "classics" have become so through the life breathed into them by those who have performed them.

The best answer to any contrary claim would be to cite that any of our classics become downright dismal when poorly presented.

Let's look at these classics to see what life they possess:

A number of rings, apparently solid, become linked and unlinked. That is the trick plot of *The Linking Rings.*

A small wooden ball appears. Then there are two, three and finally, four. They disappear one by one. Such is the trick plot of *The Multiplying Billiard Balls.*

An egg, placed in a small cloth bag, disappears. Finally, it is found to be in the bag again. You, of course, recognize the trick plot of *The Egg Bag*.

Two packets of fifteen cards each are counted out. They are placed in different locations. Three

cards leave one packet and mysteriously travel to the other. The trick plot of *The Thirty Card Trick* has been told completely.

A number of small balls mysteriously appear under any of three cups. Then they variously appear and disappear under various cups.

Be frank with yourself. Can you find the essential spark of life in any of those trick plots? Can you find that ingredient which caused them to become classics?

I think not. Frankly, I don't think the vital ingredients are there. I don't think you will find life in any trick plot. That's why I feel that the trick plots evolved through *THE TRICK BRAIN* may be equal or superior to those tricks we have chosen as classics.

Well, where is this life?

It can't very well be in method. Methods in all of these classics have changed through the years. For example, consider *The Linking Rings*. They are being done now with stratagems unknown a few decades ago. In illustration, I might cite the *Clash Link* of Laurant, Hilliard's devices with the large ring, or those I incorporated in *THE ORIENTAL RINGS*, utilizing the smaller ring.

Methods for the billiard ball trick have been evolved and changed. Egg bag methods are innumerable. No two first-class performers, I venture to say, utilize identical methods in *The Thirty Card Trick*.

No. I don't believe a trick becomes great through method.

Then what is there left?

Presentation might be the answer. Perhaps these classics came into common use through outstanding performance at first. It is possible that one performer may have been originally responsible for each. Through outstanding presentation attention might have been concentrated upon them.

In those days one could not send a check to a magic dealer and get back Number Thirty-seven from The Professional Catalogue. In the early days of the classics new tricks came the hard way.

Professor Soandso might make quite a feature out of a trick with some welded iron rings. Professor Notsosmart hears about it. So he disguises himself as a customer and goes to see Professor Soandso. He sees the trick, figures out a way of doing it-or else gets Professor Soandso's assistant drunk and learns the secret.

So Professor Notsosmart's repertoire increases from one trick to two tricks.

But there are numerous Professor Soandsos. And many more Professor Notsosmarts. Soon the whole thing gets all mixed up. Now lots of professors are doing lots of tricks. Those tricks that are most generally adaptable to the styles and abilities of the average practitioners are done so often by so many magicians that they become common.

And so a classic is born.

It becomes a classic because it fits the average style and the average abilities.

And where is that *spark* of life? In the classic? No.

Hell, gentlemen, the only spark of life evident in the whole proceedings is the spark of life shown by the Professor Notsosmarts. They were lively, indeed.

The same process is going on today.

Individual magicians will develop a new trick plot or a new method, or an individual inventor or manufacturer will put a new trick on the market. If the trick fits the average style and the average abilities, it becomes an item that is seen frequently in the repertoires of many magicians.

But let that trick have something in its style or method which does not fit the average magician, or which is beyond his abilities-from the standpoint of presentation, character, method or other essential quality-and that trick remains exclusive to the first performer or inventor, whichever the case may be. It will never be referred to as a classic.

A "classic," you see, is a trick whose secret is known by magicians generally. It is a trick that the average magician can present effectively. But because it is a classic, it does not necessarily follow that it is the best trick for you.

Objection has been raised to the arbitrary selection method set forth in *THE TRICK BRAIN*. Some critics feel that it is not sufficiently adult.

Well, here is my answer:

Years of research are made available in *THE TRICK BRAIN*. This research is organized experience.

When you consider a problem, any problem, the channels into which your thought is directed are largely encountered by chance. All thoughts arise as the result of stimuli. One type of stimulus will direct your thought in one direction. Another will divert it elsewhere. This and that idea come to us. These ideas are suggested by numerous stimuli of varying types from varying sources. So a considerable

part of our thinking, and the course it takes, is due to chance.

The arbitrary selection method set forth in *THE TRICK BRAIN* is intended, as explained in that work, to break up old idea associations. It directs the thought into the various channels developed through the research made available to the reader. Perhaps, some of these avenues would never be explored but for the fact that the experimenter is forced in that direction by the arbitrary selection method.

The tie-up of the "organized experience"-supplied through the research-and this arbitrary exploration of new paths is definitely bound to open up new vistas to the thinker. These are vistas which, perhaps, he would never encounter were he left to the normal idea association field as represented in the conventional "thinking around" a problem. Perhaps, the ultimate result may be the same in either case. But the latter is much slower and, undoubtedly, will never touch some of the ground the arbitrary method will force.

Showmanship considerations have prompted viewing presented magic from the viewpoint of the spectator.

Magical methods have necessitated examining the mechanics of magic from the confidential and exclusive coign of the magician.

Now we encounter the mental processes required by magic. These are from two viewpoints. Naturally, we must consider the aspect of magic from the viewpoint of the spectator. But the spectator's ultimate understanding of the happenings during the demonstration of a trick is quite at variance with what the magician knows to be true. This, of course, assumes that the magician's attempts at deception have been successful.

Throughout the entire presentation of a trick, the spectator is thinking. He is agreeing or disagreeing. He is convinced or unconvinced. Things seem natural and reasonable-although appearances may be otherwise. Or they seem unnatural and unreasonable. He is either deceived or not deceived.

This work undertakes to explore the psychology of deception. It will try to present the viewpoints of both the spectator and the magician. These are opposed, naturally.

Much the most important phase of magic is the attack the magician makes upon the spectator's mind. Ultimately it is the spectator's mind which must be deceived, or there is no deception whatever. All of the apparatus we use, all of the secret gimmicks we employ, all of the sleights and stratagems we invoke-everything which identifies magic as mystery-the whole is designed to deceive the mind, and the mind alone, of the spectator.

Regardless of which of the *five* senses the spectator uses to form his initial impressions, his final conclusions arise from thought processes in his mind.

How these processes develop, what factors enter into the final mixture to cause the spectator to react as he does, and other related phases of this phenomenon shall interest us here. These matters are not simple. They are extremely complex. Like all affairs of the mind, they depend upon complicated interrelations of thoughts, impressions, intuitions, ideas, and conclusions. The individual's heredity, environment, education and character influence them.

Often extremely subtle factors affect the result.

Because of the complexity of the problem, setting forth the fundamentals of the psychology of deception is going to be extremely difficult. It is being undertaken with considerable temerity on my part. Naturally, what I may say here only expresses my own viewpoint. I've said it before, but it is only prudent to repeat it: I am not omniscient. I realize I have been wrong about many things many times.

So please accept this attempt to organize the principles of the psychology of deception simply as an expression of my own analysis of the matter. When a more reasonable or more workable or more authoritative work in this field is available, throw this away and give me credit for trying.

Because this is a work on psychology it will be necessary to use certain stock trade-marks or it won't be legal. Here they are: Freud, James, Freud, Lange, Freud, _____(I've put in the blank spaces so you may add any of your own pets, to make it complete for you.) I fully intend this to be the last time that any of those names shall appear in this work.

Perhaps that alone will be an inducement to follow along with me for a while.

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CHAPTER ONE

In the first several lines of *THE TRICK BRAIN*, I stated that the black cord elastic, which pulls the vanishing handkerchief from sight, cannot be considered as something profound or difficult to understand. In contrast, I cited the miracles of chemistry, the magic of radio and radar, and the important levitations of modern aeronautics. Further evidences of similar cynicism appeared at intervals throughout that work in connection with the mechanical methods used by magicians. Irreverently, I admit, I dragged in television, the methods of modern detectives, psychiatrists, electric eyes and other miscellanies. All this, as it might be suspected without profound meditation, was designed to embarrass those who burn incense at the altars of the mechanics of magic.

Lest some take such heresy to heart, I shall now offer a new deity to worship. It would distress me sorely if, as the result of my, perhaps, rash words, there should be an epidemic of long-haired and ornamentally-bearded gentry diving off skyscrapers and high bridges, throwing themselves in front of trains or tippling prussic acid high-balls.

I said, " A *new* deity." Really, it is not a new deity. In fact, it is an old god-an idol that has inhaled many a joss paper ignited by the magically discriminating. Robert Houdin worshipped at his shrine. Maskelyne and Devant were his devotees. And many other magicians of illustrious attainment trod his temple with humble acknowledgments of his supreme power.

It is true that the elastic cord, which powers the handkerchief pull, is not profound. It is true that the person, who, idly and without inspiration, watches the flight of the multi-ton aeroplane, will tear his hair in perplexed frenzy when a common black thread hauls a crumpled piece of tissue paper up through the air. No, they are not profound. Yet, they are!

Monotonously often there has been loud hubbub and uproar when some ambitious magician consents to reveal-usually for some consideration-the secrets of magic. Dire, indeed, are the penalties

and curses heaped upon the exposer's hapless head. But almost invariably the exposer, aside from the drafts created about him by the aspirating protestants, experiences no ill effects except the fatigue induced by ducking the verbal brickbats.

Why does he not pay the supreme penalty? Because-and this is confidential-no matter what he has revealed, *he has not disclosed the secrets* of *magic.* I mean, of course, the *real* secrets of magic. Oh, I admit he may have illustrated some double-bottomed boxes or some peculiar contraptions. I also admit the exposer may have misrepresented what he offers as being the secrets of magic. It is further admitted that the gullible public may have accepted the word of the exposer. People may have believed actually that the secrets of magic were being imparted to them.

But they were not. No exposer can ever reveal the secrets of magic - even as prolific an exposer as I, whose revelations are made exclusively to the most dangerous clientele in the world-those who are interested because they intend to make use of what they learn. Not even I can expose, for reasons which will be made clear some pages hence.

I, personally, am quite certain that the explanation or the illustration of the mechanical apparatus of a magic trick is not really exposure. It is true that it may be the explanation of the mechanics of a trick. But the layman, given the apparatus and the necessary patter, cannot perform it *deceptively*. And with the identical apparatus-borrowing it, in fact, from this layman-the skilled magician will quickly convince the former of the absolute truth of the Darwin theory, even if the layman must accept the truth only as far as his own lineage is concerned.

Note that I said *skilled* magician. Actually, there is only one kind of magician. To be a magician at all, skill is necessary. Without skill, a man is not a magician-no matter what he calls himself, no matter what his cards read, no matter what clubs he belongs to, no matter what shows he does, no matter what tricks or books he owns. Without skill, he is just a plain, self-deluded egocentric duffer - with a capital "D."

And skill does not mean knowing under which cylinder the shell bottle happens to be. It does not mean an ability to make an invisible triple-pass with one hand, meanwhile juggling seven ice cream cones with the other simultaneously. It does not mean an ability to remember all of the gags heard over the radio for the past nine years. None of these is the true skill of the magician, any more than an intimate knowledge of the current prices of all of the tricks in the dealers' catalogues is skill.

Some years ago the manufacturers of Camel cigarettes-which cigarettes magicians continue to smoke in very large quantities-as I started to say, some years ago these manufacturers explained the vanishing bird cage. The trick was explained and many magicians, except those who knew better, stewed in their own juices.

But thinking magicians capitalized upon it. Stephen J. Shepard comes to mind, as I think about it.

As might be expected, the advertisement explained that the cage folded up and went into the sleeve. The drawing was very clear, and the actual mechanics of the trick was unmistakable. Mr. Shepard did not change the mechanics of the trick. He vanished the cage up the sleeve through the agency of the usual pull. But the very exposure itself made it possible for him to add a wallop that his spectators remember. They were deceived, make no mistake about that. How completely they were deceived will be revealed within these pages presently.

Let us get back to that hapless duffer I was abusing a few paragraphs back: I said that, if the magic practitioner is not skilled, he is not a magician. Without skill, I classified him as a duffer. But he need not remain so. Should he be reading this very book, at this very moment, there is hope for him. Not because this is my book, nor because I wrote it. Not even because of the subject matter, do I say this. I make this statement simply because the man, obviously, is aware that he has deficiencies. Few read books of this character from other than sincere desire to improve. Even if this book does not give him the impetus to become skilled in the direction necessary, sooner or later-after he reads enough-he will realize what he needs.

Somewhere in our magical careers we have all been duffers. We bought tricks. We learned about threads. We tried to learn sixty-two ways of accomplishing the pass. We endured excruciating fatigue in torturing our digits through the backhand palm. We pinned cockeyed looking gadgets about our clothing.

Then it was that we believed magician's skill to be the ability to lift the double cover of *The Duck Pan* without the inner lining falling out. We thought a magician was one who knew from which side of *The Foo Can* to pour. We were convinced we were skilled in magic if we had the strength to lift the celluloid disc from *The Rice Bowls*.

Those of us who are still of that mind may as well realize it. We are true duffers.

On the other hand, if we know the ability to do those things has nothing whatever to do with the true skill of the magician, we are getting out of the duffer class. The same holds true of sleight-of-hand moves. Ability to do these demonstrates nothing of the skill of the magician.

I expect to get called loudly on that statement. While many will admit that an ability to operate a mechanical device does not demonstrate any skill from the magician's viewpoint, a great many will desire to quarrel violently when I discount the magician's skill in having acquired the agility to accomplish sleight-of-hand calisthenics. Let me quickly assure you that much more magically exalted personages than I have uttered this heresy, as well. Robert-Houdin said so specifically. He should have known. Nevil Maskelyne said so. Certainly, he knew. Kellar, so I am told, bothered little with sleights. And who among us will say that he was not a skilled magician?

But it seems that the *important* things the great magicians have said have been ignored. They have been ignored as completely as if these things were said in some strange cabalistic double-talk.

These men did not use unfathomable phrases. What they said has been available all these years in simple, understandable English.

Perhaps my way of stating it will make more impression. At any rate, it cannot make less.

The true skill of the magician is in the skill he *exhibits in influencing the spectator's mind. This is not a thing of mechanics. It is not a thing of digital dexterity. It is entirely a thing of psychological attack. It is completely a thing of controlling the spectator's thinking. Control of the perceptive faculties has nothing whatever to do with it. Convincingly interpreting, to the spectator, what the senses bring to him, in such a way that the magician's objectives are accomplished, is the true skill of the skilled magician.*

So I must insist again: Shell bottles do not constitute any part of the true secrets of magic. Neither do folding bird cages. Neither do billiard ball shells. Nor Svengali packs. Nor forcing decks. Nor flap slates. Nor pulled threads. Nor folding flowers. Nor any apparatus of any kind.

The real secrets of magic are those whereby the magician is able to influence the mind of the spectator, even in the face of that spectator's definite knowledge that the magician is absolutely unable to do what that spectator ultimately must admit he does do.

Here *is* a secret!

This skilled magician is an adept at disguise and attention control. He employs physical disguise with his apparatus. He employs psychological disguise-simulation, dissimulation, maneuver, ruse, suggestion and inducement. He exercises absolute control over the attention of his spectator by forestalling it, by catching it relaxed, by dulling it, by scattering it, by diverting it, by distracting it, and by openly moving it away.

He cleverly, skillfully and dexterously mixes the true with the false. With equal facility he convincingly interprets matters to accomplish his own ends. He contrives to so influence the things the spectator perceives that the latter is aware of them *as the magician desires*. All is built upon an unshakable foundation of naturalness, plausibility and conviction.

Here is real skill! Here are genuine secrets!

Do you care to come along with me a way?

MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

CHAPTER TWO

When the last several lines of *THE TRICK BRAIN* were written, the opening motif of this work was appearing as well. In fact, they were not only the closing strains of the former and the opening theme for this one, but they were, as well, the first phrases and the initial statement of this entire undertaking.

I should like to repeat those lines for the benefit of those who are not familiar with them. They are slightly changed here in the interests of clarity:

Can it be, as *is popularly assumed, that this* (the physical and mechanical side of magic) *is the IMPORTANT part of magic?*

I think not.

I think the mind of the performer, utilizing these elements intelligently and discriminately, influencing and guiding the minds of the spectators expertly and skillfully, contains the real secrets of magic, secrets beyond the abilities of anyone to reveal hurtfully.

The secrets of the mind, the REAL secrets of magic, cannot be exposed.

But these secrets of the mind may be explained.

There is a nice distinction in the diction involved. *Exposure* usually means a formal or deliberate revealing of something that is discreditable, detrimental, injurious or derogatory to the subject. An *explanation* makes plain or intelligible that which is not known or clearly understood, without the injurious implications included in *exposure*.

And why shouldn't the secrets of psychological deception become exposure in their mere explanation? Because the *intent* of the performer and the *secret workings* of his mind cannot be known by the spectator unless the performer is unskilled in the psychological essentials. Frankly, I dislike the use of the word *psychological*. It makes the processes seem too deep and obscure and complex. But in magic, where the simpler word *mental* would do, there is much danger of confusion with the standard carryings-on of those performers in the specialized field of so-termed *mental magic*.

But to get back to the idea I was trying to establish: Why can't the intent of the performer and the secret workings of his mind be known by the spectator? Simply because the spectators' own knowledge of the magician's thoughts must come through what the performer reveals to him. It must come from what he says. It must come from what he does. It must come from what he implies.

Whether the spectator knows the performer's true thought or something else is entirely within the performer's control. He may reveal or conceal as be sees fit.

So even though the spectator may know the secrets of psychological deception-all of them-he cannot possibly know *when* the magician is employing them. If the performer is skillful, there is no external distinction between deception and truth.

Probably the most important single phase of magic is in the field of interpretation for the spectator.

In *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS* the word *interpret* was used in connection with the performer's *interpretation* of a trick as an *entertainment unit*, or as a part of one. In this case, reference was made to the performance of a trick in such a manner that the entertainer arbitrarily gave it a sense that it may not have had ordinarily. He conveyed his conception as to how it should be presented, according to his views.

In this work it is necessary to give a new meaning to *interpretation*. We are no longer concerned with a trick as an entertainment unit. In fact, we are not now concerned with an entire trick at all. Our interests are upon the mental side of presentation for *deception*, not entertainment. Therefore, we are concentrating upon those *portions* of the operative part of the trick, wherein psychological principles are applied.

So now we refer to some stage in the accomplishment of a deception, not a trick. We now take *interpretation* to mean *to construe the performer's words, actions and implications in the light of the performer's individual interests*. The interpreting is not done by the spectator. It is done by the *performer*. It is done by the performer in such a manner that the spectator gets the sense that the performer *wishes to convey to him*. If the spectator doesn't understand the magician's words and actions as the performer wishes him to, the performer as an interpreter has failed.

Let's take a simple illustration.

The magician holds a small ball between his left thumb and forefinger. He apparently takes the ball from the left hand with his right. Secretly he has performed *The French Drop*. The ball is still in his left hand.

The capable magician will perform the apparent taking of the ball *exactly* as he would if he were actually taking the ball. He would not put stress on the sleight. He would give but casual-and passing-attention to his left hand. His eyes would rest momentarily upon the ball as he reached for it. Then his eyes would follow the right hand, follow it naturally, convincingly, still casually, just as they would had he actually seized the ball with his right. The words he would use-and his posture as well-would be exactly the same as they would be had he carried the ball away from the left. Also, the fingers of the left would relax naturally. They would relax, as would the arm, as if the hand were actually empty.

This business, this combination of controlled movements, calculated words, studied posture, shifting attention, convincing and natural in appearance, is the process of interpreting for the spectators. The performer construes it, this series of happenings, so that the spectator will understand it as the performer's individual interests require.

It cannot be carelessly done. Great skill and nice judgment are necessary. It must be natural. It must be convincing. It must *truly* represent and express the action it seems to be. Any bit of artificiality will destroy the sense the performer is trying to convey. Any unnaturalness-whether it be of posture, action, comment or other-will reveal it to be false. If it is revealed to be false, it will not seem to express the performer's true thoughts and purposes. Therefore, it will fail to deceive.

The spectator must be thoroughly convinced that he knows the performer's true purpose and intent at every stage of the execution of the deception. Otherwise it will not deceive.

Let's dig into the elements of interpretation a bit deeper.

Suppose a man were standing with an uplifted arm, his hand clutching a heavy stick.

He could be threatening someone. He could be greeting someone. He could be inviting someone to come to him. He could, as well, be attempting to repel someone. His action could be one of triumph or of failure. He could be indicating the right way or directing the wrong way. He could be playing a game or fighting for his life. His purpose might be good or evil.

How would you know what he was actually doing, or what his purpose was?

By his posture. By his facial expression. And by what he says and how he says it.

If he were threatening you, his face would show enmity. He would clutch the stkk purposefully and menacingly. His body would be in position to use the stkk effectively. Yet, even though he menaced

you, you might still advance. Perhaps something in his expression would reveal that he was afraid of you. Or perhaps you could see that he intended to flee if opposed.

Yet he could be motioning you to come to him, externally friendly, but with the secret intent of belaboring you unmercifully once you came within'effective range. In this case he would be interpreting his intent. He would be interpreting his intent for your express disadvantage. Also, he would be interpreting his intent for his distinct advantage.

Doesn't a *good* magician do that when he seeks to deceive his spectators?

Notice I used the adjective good. All magicians don't interpret effectively. I am now using the word *magician* to mean a performer of tricks of deception, I don't mean an entertainer. Because all magicians don't interpret effectively, all magicians are not good magicians. In fact, too many magicians are not good. Too many magicians are not good because they cannot interpret effectively. Too many of them do not know how to interpret with skill. Many of them can't interpret convincingly, even though they understand how it should be done. And a great, great many are not interested in how it may be done.

Skillful and effective interpretation, you must know, is possible only through skillful and effective acting. That's why the definition that *a magician is an actor playing the part of a magician* is so definitely valid. Without convincing acting you can't have effective deception. Without effective deception you cannot have a good magician.

Of course, this only refers to the magician as a mechanic. The essentials that lift him from the ranks of the mechanics to the spotlight of an entertainer, as I see them, are completely set forth in the first book of this series *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS*.

These psychological principles of deception are much more important than the mechanics of physical deception because they are much more effective. They are subtle. They rely upon powerful principles. They are insidious, irresistible.

By no means is the use of psychological deception confined to magicians. Unscrupulous politicians, dishonest tradesmen, unprincipled lawyers and equally untrustworthy financiers, officials, writers and others employ interpretation-construing in the light of their own individual interests-to accomplish deceptions for their own advantage. And effectively, too. Whole empires have been *lost*, and won, through skillful application of the untrue that seems true.

So in studying practical applications of interpretation for deception the magician is acquiring a knowledge that will be of value to him, aside from its application to magic, in escaping being victimized through these same stratagems, Since all magicians are honest, of course, they will not apply these principles unethically.

But the dishonest layman, applying mental deception, has an advantage over the magician. By the very nature of the magician's field of activity, his spectators are forewarned. This is not so of the others. Every art is used to prevent the usual victim from suspecting that all is not what it seems.

The ingredients of psychological deception are pretense, disguise, implication, misdirection, prearrangement, simulation, dissimulation, anticipation and all other resorts and stratagems calculated to lure the unsuspecting spectator along a path of ultimate victimization. But the magician must accomplish his objective with great skill and cunning because, as has been said before, his spectators know in advance that he intends to deceive them.

Just let me illustrate how important this phase of magic is:

We shall take an old familiar trick, *The Diebox*.

Briefly, the effect is that a large wooden die is placed in a two-compartment box. The performer seems to pretend to vanish the die. Actually the spectators have good cause to believe that he has simply allowed the die to slide from one compartment to the other, alternatively, as he shows the opposite section empty. Finally, after the spectators become insistent that he cease evading their demands to open all doors at once, all four doors are opened simultaneously. The die has disappeared. It is found in a previously empty hat.

That is the effect as the spectators are expected to see it.

But what actually happens?

The performer shows an actually empty hat. He places it to one side. A large wooden block, encased in a four-sided shell, is shown. The shell, while loose, covers the two sides, the bottom and the front of the die. But it covers and fits in such a manner that it seems to be the sides, bottom and front of the block. Both the block and the shell are painted black. The block is made to appear to be a die by means of large white round gummed spots. These are pasted on the die, arranged as are the spots on a real die. The corresponding faces' of the shell are spotted in a similar manner to simulate the proper sides of the block.

A wooden box is exhibited. This box contains two compartments, each sufficiently large to accomodate the die and its shell. There are four doors in this box-one for the front of each compartment and another for the top of each section. The box also has a sliding weight in its double bottom. As the box is tilted from side to side the weight will slide to the lower end with an audible thump. Some boxes have a metal flap attached to the rear of one of the front doors. A secret catch allows the flap and door to operate as the door only, the flap becoming the rear of this door. Or, by releasing the catch, the flap will stay in the front opening when the door is opened. The audience side of the flap is painted to represent one side of the die. But, of course, when the flap is held to the door, this is unseen.

After showing the box, the performer shows that the die and shell will fit into It. Then he places the die and shell into the hat. He takes the shell from the hat, leaving the solid die behind. He takes it from the hat in such a manner that the sides, front and bottom of the shell are towards the audience, with the open spaces at the back and top

He turns the back of the box towards the audience and puts the metal shell into it, trying to keep the open sides of the shell from showing and also trying to keep the metal from clanking.

This done, he closes the top and front doors-so that the box will not seem to be empty, as indeed it would seem, if the spectators were to look in. This is because the shell now corresponds to the contours of the solid sides, bottom and back of one compartment of the box.

If this diebox has the flap feature, he will open one door, releasing the flap as he does so, and let the spectators see that the die is apparently in the box. After which he closes the door, tilts the box and allows the weight to thump against the opposite side. The spectators are expected to mistake this for the die. So when he reopens the door; this time keeping the flap attached to the door, the compartment will seem empty.

He closes this door, tilts the box, allowing the weight to slide to the opposite side, and opens the front door of the higher compartment. Of course, this section is empty. But the audience is expected to think the die has been tilted behind the door of the now lower compartment. When it is demanded that he open both doors, the magician knows very well what is meant, but he pretends to think that the spectators want the top door opened as well. So he swings open the door at the top of the higher section, leaving the front door open. Of course, if the audience reacts as expected, there will be demands that he open the other side. So, closing the top and bottom doors of the higher side, he tilts the box. The weight whacks again and the front and top doors of the opposite side are opened.

This by-play may go on for some time. In fact, it has been known to go on too long. Ultimately, however, the magician eventually opens all doors, showing the inside of the box, showing also the inside of the metal shell. Then the solid die is retrieved from the hat where it had been placed in the first place, right in front of the spectators eyes.

The foregoing is actually what takes place. It is obvious that all facts cannot be revealed to the spectators. In fact, it is equally obvious that some parts of the true state of affairs must not only be concealed but that it is absolutely necessary to substitute a number of false impressions. The apparatus can't do that. Left to the deceptions built into the mechanical part of the trick, there would probably be no deception.

The magician could not handle the die and shell as if they were a die and shell and expect to maintain a mystery as to how the trick is accomplished. He can't handle the box as if it were a box with a sliding weight built into the bottom. Neither may he handle that flap door as if it were a flap and door. He may not even place the die and shell in the hat originally, just to be placing them in there.

Well. What must he do?

There you have the subject of this whole work.

MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

CHAPTER THREE

How do magicians go about it when they desire to cause something to appear mysteriously? To perform magical creation? To accomplish apparently miraculous production?

At present, there are three general expedients.

The most common solution of the problem is a laborious and tedious search. Catalogues are thoroughly shifted. Textbooks on magic are thumbed from cover to cover. The performances of other magicians are eagerly scouted. And the magic shops are visited again and again.

Of course, the deliberate decision to add an effect of a definite nature is not the *usual* way the *average* magician adds to his routine or repertoire. The usual trick is added by the run-of-the-mill magical enthusiast simply because something in the number appeals to him. It might be the appearance of the apparatus. Or the apparent profundity of the method, the deceptive feature. Or the comedy potentialities. Or any of a number of other factors.

I'm convinced this is NOT the correct way to add program material. It seems far better to me to add material from the viewpoint of its importance in adding entertainment value to the performer's routine.

However, should a magician decide to add a production or appearance number to his program, usually through search he finds some type of trick that supplies the desired general effect. The specific trick selected usually determines the object with which the effect is accomplished. Then, the object to be used established, if he desires to tie it into a unified routine, he shapes and warps and changes matters until he meets his requirements as nearly as possible.

The somewhat more exacting magician will usually adopt the second method. Here, he will decide to add some type of production or mysterious appearance. Before embarking upon his search, he will determine the object or objects with which he wishes to accomplish the effect. Then, as before, he will make the search. But this investigation is not so general. Specifically, he knows what he wants to cause to appear. His hunt is limited to tricks in which the desired object is used.

If he fails in his search, or if the tricks he finds do not seem satisfactory to him, usually he will decide upon a second object to take the place of the first choice. Then he makes the search all over again.

The third method of adding the desired effect is to decide what to use and to invent a method of accomplishing it. This, of course, occurs seldom. It is a tiresome, tedious, arduous mental process. And most magicians do not care for mental processes, even those of minor difficulty.

This type of invention is largely hit or miss. It relies to a great extent upon luck and inspiration.

But if this inventor had ever tried marshaling all of the possible methods, his difficulties would have been simplified considerably. Really, there are not many basic ways of accomplishing a magical appearance.

Generally, a production, or an appearance, is an effect in which the aspect to the spectator is the materialization of something or someone. This appearance may be either gradual or instantaneous. It may take place out in the open, uncovered, or back of, or within or beneath something. It is essential, of course that the effect be accomplished without apparent reasonable physical causation.

As it appears to the spectator, the performer may just be standing in sight and suddenly he may be seen holding something, something which was not visible a moment before. Or an object may become visible at a place removed from the magician. Or the entertainer may take something from a place previously shown empty.

Again, the magician apparently might catch something on the end of some object he may be holding, such as a wand, a fish line, or a net. A particularly impressive appearance is that during which an object or a person seems to materialize gradually from thin air, becoming first a nebulous outline which slowly takes on more and more opaque substance. Close to this type of production is the one where a nucleus is seen to develop into the object finally produced.

Right at the start, in discussing appearances let it be clearly realized that no magician can create anything. Therefore, the subject of the eventual production must be hidden somewhere. The problem, then, becomes one of arranging a suitable hiding place and devising a method of getting the subject from that place of concealment to the place of production in such a manner that the subject will seem to be produced magically. It is a matter of concealing the subject in a hiding place incorporated in the place of production, or concealing its acquirement and conveyance from a more or less removed place of

concealment.

Practically all of these productions are accomplished through one or a combination or a variation of a comparative few basic principles.

The most elemental of all production methods comes to mind instantly. Concealed within the clothing worn by the performer is the object to be produced. A billiard ball is the most common example, perhaps. The magician reaches into the air and apparently grasps the object. At the same time, while the spectators' attention is on the hand reaching for the object, the other hand unobtrusively actually secures it. Then the hand, which has reached into the air, is brought to the hand actually containing the object. The performer apparently places it in the latter hand and holds it up to view.

The object to be produced has been secured from a secret hiding place and has been brought into position for revelation, while the spectators' attention has been directed elsewhere.

This stratagem has been used for many years for the production of cigars, cigarettes, balls, cards, eggs, glasses of liquid and many other things. It is also usable for the production of many other things, things not so commonly associated with this principle. I might suggest eyeglasses, fountain pens, pieces of rope, sandwiches, pineapples-fruit or explosive, scissors, newspapers or anything else under the sun, of suitable size and material.

As an example we might paraphrase a Lloyd Enochs variation of a Jardine Ellis wineglass production. Instead of a wineglass, let us assume that we need a pair of scissors for a cut rope trick we are about to do. The scissors are hanging point down from a clip. This clip is secured to the performer's vest at about belt height. The whole, clip and scissors, is concealed by the left side of the coat. Or the clip may be dispensed with, the point of the scissors being tucked between the waistband of the trousers and the body, handle upwards.

Now the performer wipes his hands with his handkerchief. Holding the handkerchief in his left hand, he allows it to fall down, retaining it by one corner clipped between the first and second fingers. Meanwhile the performer's right hand is exploring the right vest pocket. But the search is fruitless and he takes the handkerchief in his right hand to allow the left to similarly investigate the left vest pocket. Still nothing. So with a shrug, he spreads the handkerchief over the right palm, lifts it from the center once or twice. Finally, he lifts it a bit higher and releases it. The handkerchief fails to fall. A pointed object that seems to be standing on the right palm supports it. When the handkerchief is taken away, the scissors are revealed.

Employing the principle of securing the object from a secret hiding place while the attention is directed elsewhere, the magician simply reached clear across the body and slipped his second and third fingers into the loops of the handles. He did this in the act of taking the handkerchief from the left hand with his right. But the right went right on past the hanging handkerchief, clipped the scissors, then lifted to the fingers of the left to take the handkerchief. Beneath it, he carried the scissors.

He allowed the scissors to hang below the right hand, the folds of the handkerchief concealing them. Then, when he wanted the scissors to appear, he simply closed his hand into a fist, bringing the scissors upright. The handkerchief fell upon the scissors point and a moment later was taken away to disclose the production.

Almost the same method will allow a magician to produce a large stem goblet-I mean a *large* one. In this case the goblet is held underneath the coat beneath the left armpit, base in front and container portion in back. The left hand is held a bit higher just prior to the move.

But this principle has several variations, as well. Sometimes it is used with a form.

A ring within a double handkerchief has been used for years for the production of a tumbler of water. This ring simulates the materialization of the tumbler before the actual tumbler is present. This draws the attention to the handkerchief, a less vigilant attention because the production has been accomplished apparently. During this interval the performer secures the real glass and brings it up under the folds of the handkerchief.

Even a bent arm frequently acts as a form to simulate the production of a bowl of water, the actual bowl meanwhile being taken from beneath the armpit.

But forms may be used for a variety of things besides those usually produced-books, small frying pans, plates, boxes, anything that may lend itself to effective concealment. And you are not limited to the body itself as a secret place of concealment.

Consider Steve Shepard's production of a large punch bowl. The bowl itself is on a stand. On top of the bowl is a round wood disc that is about the same diameter as the bowl. The "table" drape is attached to this disc, and, to the spectator, the stand looks like an ordinary draped one. All of this is quite similar to the usual large bowl production except that the stand is telescopic. The weight of the bowl of liquid pushes the real table top, also equipped with a duplicate drape, downwards a distance equal to the height of the bowl. If the filled bowl should be lifted from the table momentarily, the real top would spring up into place and lock itself in this position. Then the table top would support the weight of the bowl of liquid.

Of course, the appearance of the table, with top depressed and bowl "loaded" is the same as the aspect of the table after the bowl is removed, except that the real table top is somewhat less in diameter than the outside dimension of the bowl.

In operation, however, the magician pretends to catch the bowl beneath the foulard. His uplifted and curved left forearm simulates the bowl. The performer looks about him for a place to deposit the bowl. He sees the "table," which is loaded with the bowl, rushes to it and starts to put down the bowl. Meanwhile he lifts the real bowl from the table and holds it beneath the foulard. The magician seems to

change his mind, looks about him for a better place but finally plunks down the bowl, water spilling and plopping on the floor pulling away the foulard.

Since the "loaded" table has the same appearance with or without the bowl, the use of the table for the necessary secret hiding place is valid.

This idea may be varied for the production of many other objects, even a small radio, or a clock, or a lunch box.

Another variation in the use of this idea is exemplified when a detachable or attachable portion of the object to be produced is revealed in lieu of the entire thing, after which the remainder of the object, constituting its major portion, is secured from a secret hiding place when the spectator's vigilance has been relaxed.

This principle has been used little as an appearance. The reverse of the old vanishing doll trick will illustrate. A small cloak is shown apparently empty. From a tiny pocket in this cloak, the performer produces the head of a small wooden doll. He sticks this head through the top opening in the cloak, as if the entire doll were there. Then, holding the cloaked doll in one hand, the performer inspects it, directing his talk and the spectators' attention to the doll. Meanwhile the other hand has unobtrusively secured the missing, and greater, portion of the doll from his clothing. When he brings this hand to the doll beneath the cloak, he slips the remainder of the body onto the head and removes the cloak, thus revealing the entire doll.

An illusion could arise from this idea. Suppose we were to enlarge the cloak so that it would touch the floor when worn by a human. Suppose there were a mask secreted within a convenient pocket. The mask is produced. The performer wrestles with his Frankenstein past a convenient screen or other place of concealment for a human accomplice. Of course, the assistant ducks under the cloak and sticks his head up into the mask. When the struggle takes the performer down to the footlights, the mask and cloak are pulled off.

Anything that has a top portion, which can be made attachable, may be produced if a suitable hiding place for the remainder of the object is available. Such things might be statuettes, bottles, dummy ducks, objects attached to ropes or ribbons or chains.

For repeated productions, there is yet a simpler stratagem used. During the act of revealing a previously secured object, such as a ball or an egg, the opposite hand secures another similar one from a secret supply. Then, when apparently depositing the first object into the opposite hand, the original object is retained and the duplicate is revealed in its place.

Somewhat similar to this is loading a new object in the act of taking away that produced. A familiar repeating cigar production illustrates this perfectly. One cigar is produced and placed in the opposite hand. But while the right is placing it in the left, the left hand is loading another, unseen, into

the right.

There are probably nine hundred and seventy-five thousand ways this principle of secretly loading while attention is elsewhere might be disguised, cloaked, counterfeited or otherwise camouflaged. To attempt to give a complete list of the various ways in which this method has been utilized in the past, not to speak of the possible applications in the future, would be impossible.

And if you can't think of other things to use-I mean things that haven't been used before-you're wasting your time with this book. There are at least a million objects that have never been used with it. Get a Sears, Roebuck catalogue and check the items, new items, you see.

Now we reach the "hand-is-quicker-than-the-eye" school of production. Only the hand isn't involved in it at all. The hand isn't fast enough, as all of us very well know.

We might term this production method something like this:

Bringing the object into production position with great speed, or in such a manner that the eye cannot follow its course from its secret hiding place.

In general, there are three classes of mechanical pulls that may bring an object into sight from a remote hiding place. They bring it into sight with the requisite amount of speed. These are the pulled thread, the elastic pull and the spring pull. Other mechanical power applications-released counterweight, electric motor, steam engine-come under this heading, if the subject of the production is brought into position with the proper amount of speed.

In addition, there is the catapult that throws the object to production location.

The invisible thread jerks the object into view from its secret hiding place so swiftly that its flight cannot be seen.

The appearing handkerchief in the decanter is a good illustration. The handkerchief is concealed within a pocket in the table. Tied to the handkerchief is a strong thread. This leads down into the neck of the bottle, through a hole in the bottom or a side, and thence offstage to an assistant. Sometimes the thread is tied to a weight which can be released suddenly. A sudden swift jerk brings the handkerchief into sight within the decanter.

This could be converted into a new trick by substituting props other than those used in the original version. A milk bottle could be used instead of the conventional decanter. Or a whiskey bottle. Use a necktie in place of the handkerchief, or even a small collapsible snake. Or combine the milk bottle, alone, with any vanish of a flag, a handkerchief or a piece of silk wearing apparel-even a brassiere or a pair of panties.

New tricks have been "invented" with less evidence of originality than the substitution of the milk bottle for the decanter in this example.

The same principle of using the thread to pull an object into view is demonstrated in *Orrin's Spider Web Trick.*

Notice that the thread is still used but that the background of the web helps to conceal both the thread and the pocket from which the card slides. Another important difference is that the movement of the thread is accomplished indirectly *by spinning the web.*

That spider web trick is identical in basic principle to the old decanter trick. But Orrin substituted a card for the handkerchief. He substituted a disc decorated as a spider's web in place of the table. The thread remained. But instead of pulling the thread, *he pulled the pocket away*. This was made possible because of the distance the pocket moved in spinning around the shaft, as it wrapped the thread. For the decanter, of course, the figure of the spider was substituted. Moving the place of appearance rapidly took the place of moving the appearing object rapidly.

There is another important change Orrin made in the old trick. Instead of an assistant or a weight pulling the thread, *the performer pulled it himself*. But he applied the force in an indirect manner. He applied the force in spinning the web, a perfectly plausible and, therefore, a perfectly deceptive action.

I don't suppose Mr. Orrin consciously went through the various steps of deliberate substitution, working from the old decanter trick, as outlined here. *But it could have been produced in that manner*.

Consider the steps in outline form:

1. The objects are changed—a card for a handkerchief, a spider for a decanter.
2. The place of appearance was changed in character. The original location was inside a transparent object.
3. The source of power was changed. Originally it came from a concealed assistant. Here the performer himself applied the power—indirectly.
4. Instead of moving the appearing object rapidly, Orrin moves the place of appearance rapidly.
5. Absence of a suitable background originally made it necessary to do the trick at a distance. Here, a background that made the thread invisible moved the trick much closer to the spectator.

It seems a far cry from the old decanter trick to this spider's web trick, but actually, as is evident here, they are very closely related.

We might try a similar invention right now, still using that decanter trick as the basis.

At random, we substitute a photograph for the handkerchief. This substitution suggests a frame in which it may appear. We must have a place in which to hide the picture prior to its appearance. A hollow back immediately comes to mind. The picture could be rolled up in one edge of the frame as well.

To meet modern conditions we might borrow the indirect method of applying the power to pull the thread. Spinning the frame, as Orrin spins the web, would do. The frame might be mounted, spinning around vertically. Or it might spin from back to front, horizontally, on a shaft extending from side to side. Of course, we could spin it as the web is turned.

The thread is attached to the picture. This is brought into view as the frame turns.

Some experiment might be necessary to determine the best hiding place. More experiment will determine the proper type of rotation. Other details, such as insuring that the picture will not be caught, construction to insure smooth passage, stiffness of the picture stock and other' matters will develop the best general plan.

But you do not necessarily have to spin the frame. You may, instead, merely secure a thread of the proper length to some convenient fastening-a chair or a piece of apparatus-and walk forward quickly, holding the frame in front of you with both hands. The picture will appear in a bewildering fashion.

Or go back to the milk bottle. Use that instead of a decanter. Put it on a turntable. Provide a method of fastening the bottle so it will not fly off. Then spin it. This could cause a handkerchief, a flag, even a flower to appear, pulled into view quickly from a pocket concealed within the turntable top.

The same principle has been applied to non-apparatus magic. The hands are substituted for the decanter. The space behind the vest takes the place of the pocket in the table. The thread still remains.

Secured to two corners of a large flag, the thread extends across the top. The flag is folded and tucked beneath the vest, leaving the thread extending across the body. In a flash merely hooking the thumbs under the thread and extending the arms forward and apart produces the flag. Properly done, the flag seems to appear suddenly between the two hands.

This may be used for a flash production of almost anything concealed beneath the vest, the coat or within a pocket. With one end of the thread attached to a firm foundation, just hooking one thumb beneath it and pushing forward suddenly will make it possible to produce a silk, a flower, or some small device with which you work.

Another application of the same principle is the use of the elastic cord instead of the thread.

This also, working like the thread, brings the object from a concealed hiding place. A familiar example is *The Card Sword*, or a similar device for producing a handkerchief. Here the elastic extends

through the hollow blade and emerges at the tip. The cards or handkerchiefs are attached to the end of the elastic. The elastic is stretched out and brought down behind the blade so that the cards or silks may be concealed within a hiding place at the handle. When the elastic is released the production springs into view at the tip of the blade.

The principle is still the same as that in the decanter trick. Here are the familiar hiding place, the object to be produced, the location at which it is produced, and a means of bringing the object to its destination suddenly.

Basically, the only difference is that the performer applies the power *before the performance*. The energy is expended when he stretches the elastic. This power remains stored up for use until needed.

In the above variation the change is in the *indirect* application of the power *prior* to *performance*.

You need not use a sword. A broom, a long stick, a cane or anything supplying sufficient length of elastic to allow the object to be produced to reach its hiding place, and with sufficient "take-up" to bring the object to its place of appearance, will do. This principle has been used for years to bring a rose, concealed beneath the armpit, into the buttonhole. It could cause a necktie to appear-perhaps it has.

Why couldn't the stretched elastic, or even the thread, be used to bring a rope coil to the fingertips? Then the performer could calmly proceed about this business of cutting and restoring this rope, as if magicians invariably obtained the rope to be used merely by reaching into the air for it.

Or the scissors?

Note the variety of power applications evident already. The force may be applied directly through an assistant or a pulling mechanism. Or it may be supplied indirectly by a mechanism that will conceal what you are really doing, like *The Spider's Web*. The power may be stored up and the actual pull may be applied before the performance and held for later release. You are not restricted to the use of elastic for this. A tension spring or a coiled spring reel will do the work as well, if adapted to the specific application.

The third class of device used for our present principle is the spring-operated lever. This is similar to the familiar mousetrap. The tension of the spring is such that its tendency is to bring the arm into a position reaching the place of production.

The object is secured to the lever. Power is applied to bend the lever to a position where the object is in its hiding place. It is held thus until time for production. Upon release this arm swings the object into position with great speed.

The Card in Balloon is an illustration. Here, at rest, the arm is in a position that would bring the card within the balloon. With the card affixed to the arm, the arm is turned back against the spring

tension so that the card may be concealed within its hiding place in the base of the stand. When it is released, the arm swings around instantly, carrying the card to the balloon. The balloon breaks and the card appears in its place.

Other similar tricks are *The Card on Candle, The Card in Flowers Vase* and *The Card Star*.

This method is accomplished in yet another way. Here the power is applied through gravity, centrifugal force or other similar power. Usually some means of guiding the object is necessary.

The coin wand generally credited to the late T. Nelson Downs illustrates this admirably. The wand is not strictly a wand. It is a piece of heavy wire or light rod. A slot is cut in the outside end and the two sides of the cut are bent outwards in a slight "V." This, with the main body of the so-called wand, forms a "Y". The result is that the extreme inch or so at the outside end is somewhat larger than the diameter of the wire.

A number of coins are prepared by soldering small rings to their centers, the planes of the rings being at right angles to the planes of the coins. These rings are just large enough to slide loosely up and down the length of the wand. But they are not large enough to slide past the expanded split.

Five or six of the prepared coins are threaded onto the wire wand at the narrow end. These are covered with the hand in grasping the wand. When the hand sweeps the wand in the air the coins are released one at a time. Centrifugal force causes the individual coin to slide up the wand and jam at the "V." When the performer forces this coin over the "V" , the sides of the split spring in and allow the coin to pass. This is repeated until all the coins have appeared.

Of course, this principle may be applied to any long thin object such as sticks, canes, swords. And the objects to be produced are limited only by the size of the concealment space available.

Another variation of this idea is an appearing alarm clock stand. I mean the one where the clocks appear suddenly at the ends of lengths of ribbon. The clocks are concealed in the upper part of the frame. Behind each ribbon is a strong cord that is attached to the lower end of the ribbon at one end and to the frame, at the top, at the other. This cord runs through the top ring in the alarm clock.

When the clocks are released one by one they seem to become attached suddenly to the lower ends of their respective ribbons. Of course, they are guided into position by means of the hidden cord. Sometimes a second cord is included, designed to trip the bell silencer. This causes the clocks to start ringing at the instant they seem to appear at the ends of the ribbons.

Another similar application is used in the trick where a watch suddenly appears at the end of a chain. The chain is hanging from the vest. There is no watch attached to the lower end. At a gesture from the performer the watch suddenly appears at the end of this chain.

A black thread runs from the free end of the chain to a place beneath the vest. It runs through the ring at the top of a watch. The watch is tucked under the vest and held there by means of body pressure. When the performer desires the watch to appear he merely relaxes the pressure, and the watch falls into place. Of course, some type of automatic or mechanical release could be devised to hold the watch, thus eliminating the body pressure necessity.

Going back to the coin wand, instead of using the wand as a guide, we could, were it advisable, use the cord or thread guide principle as provided for the clock and watch. With this type of guide the article to be produced need not be concealed within the hand. It may be concealed in the clothing, or even in an adjacent piece of furniture. This would permit using larger objects.

Medium-sized objects could appear at the ends of brooms, parasols, golf clubs. Or a butterfly net could be used. Or even a tea or vegetable strainer. It would be possible to produce a carrot, say, in a pair of those tongs they use in the kitchen for removing vegetables from boiling water.

This could be used for delivering a deck of cards for production behind the knee. Instead of a watch appearing at the end of the chain, one could catch a toy fish. With the proper costume, this method could supply a means of producing a large bowl on the floor.

One need not be limited to having clocks appear on the ends of ribbons. Any large object could be used, provided its place of concealment would not be too obvious. It is not necessary to use four ribbons. Neither need ribbons be used at all. A rope or a chain or a pendulum might be more suitable.

Coins could be caused to appear in a glass tumbler. They could be guided from some nearby accessory like a stand, guided by means of an invisible thread. They could even slide down this thread from the wings.

A large metal pail could be hanging from a tripod. Space could be provided at the top of the tripod for the concealment of a coconut. A balloon full of water-I mean a rubber balloon could probably be guided into position to land in the pail. Upon impact it would break. Probably you would better have a lot of mops around if you experiment with this idea in the living room.

If you are capable of providing a logical and unsuspicious place of concealment, this is an easy way to "invent" a trick of your own. Merely substitute anything which comes to mind—cabbages, bottles, old automobile tires. Look out for it in producing humans-unless you have an unlimited supply of assistants. This principle without the refinements is the basis, you know, of one method of eliminating undesirable citizens.

We have still to discuss the catapult so clearly demonstrated in *The Television Frame*. Here a card is placed in position upon a spring built into a secret hiding place. In *The Television Frame* this hiding place is usually the base, although a similar device has been built to be concealed within the hand. Two sheets of glass are held a slight distance apart at one edge. The spring is so placed that when

released it will hurl the card through this opening edgeways at great speed. The narrowing space between the plates ultimately stops the card's flight. Thus, with a pair of rubber band encircled plates held in the hand, or supported upon a stand, the card or cards seem to appear suddenly between the two glass sheets.

Another method of bringing an object into view quickly is the use of a revolving panel. The appearance of a ringing alarm clock, familiar to dealers' catalogues for years, is an excellent illustration. The appearance is accomplished through a quick half revolution of a panel in the background within a frame. Where attention is directed upon the place of production, this method has seemed somewhat obvious to me. But as used in connection with the vanishing alarm clock, it was effective for the reason that the spectators' attention was not on the place of appearance. Rather, they were watching the vanish. The ringing of the duplicate clock, the instant of the reappearance, brought the attention to that phase of the trick.

This revolving panel feature has been used with humans.

Naturally, the idea of a quick appearance is not limited to the use of a revolving panel. Two containers, properly rigged, which can be moved simultaneously with great speed, the one containing the object to be produced taking the place of the empty one, are just as effective in combination.

Other objects may be substituted for the clock, of course.

MAGIC
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CHAPTER FOUR

The next principle we encounter is that of the secret compartment. Many applications of this idea are so crude that their only value seems to be to prove that the average human has the intelligence of a twelve-year-old child. And I'm quite certain that the statement is libelous to the child.

In its simplest form the secret compartment is usually built into a container of some kind-a box, a tube, a cabinet or something similar. Because the direct application is usually just what the spectator suspects anyway, I very definitely feel that it is too lacking in subtlety to be effective, except in cases where the spectator is almost entirely lacking in ingenuity or imagination.

This is the fundamental principle used exhaustively in the jumping-in-and-out-of-boxes school of illusions.

The object to be produced may be solid, in which case the secret hiding place is of sufficient size to accommodate it, in a manner similar to a fat woman in a drug store telephone booth. Or the object may be expandable. Then, naturally, the secret compartment is comparatively small.

In the earlier applications of this method, simply building a false bottom or back in the cabinet or box formed the secret compartment. When the interior is shown for the inspection of the audience, the entire space inside is not visible. Beneath or behind the false bottom or back is the load to be produced.

Frequently this secret space is secured by building the cover or lid with sufficient thickness to accommodate the load and by adding a false top. Building the secret compartment across a corner has varied this principle. Here, instead of the false bottom being parallel with the bottom or back, it is placed at an angle, cutting off a corner. Or it may come up to the top edge, tapering in from the edge of the opening, a gradually increasing side, to the bottom, or back.

Later variations of this principle have resulted in double sides being used. Actually, instead of the sides being solid wood or metal, one or more of them is hollow. The inside wall usually opens to allow access from the inside of the box.

Cylindrical tubes have been made which also use this built-in secret compartment. While the tube may give the general appearance of being a single thickness of metal when viewed from one end, actually the tube has a lining. This lining tapers in diameter from front-the audience side-to back. The gradually increasing space between the lining and outside supplies the necessary secret space to allow for the concealment of the object to be produced.

This principle has been used with square tubes as well.

In many cases this secret compartment is not in a fixed location. One type of secret compartment revolves on a panel in the back of the box. This allows the cabinet to be shown empty, when the container holding the load is rotated to the back. Yet, when the door is closed and the container is revolved within the box, the back may be exhibited as well.

Another type of moving container rocks back and forth on a panel at the rear, like the old-fashioned flour bin. It is used very much like the rotating container.

The well-known *Jap Box* is an example of the secret compartment being built in the sides. *The Phantom Tube* is a good illustration of the tapering inner shell used with a round tube. Both the rotating and tipping types of secret container have been utilized with production screens.

There are many common applications of the built-in secret compartment. These include The *Magic Funnel, The Lota Bowl*, the double bowl used with *The Brahman Rice Bowls* and other similar double-sided or double-bottomed devices. *The Egg Bag* is provided with a secret compartment in the double side. Such hiding places may be built into almost anything—tables, taborets, chairs-as in the familiar Okito production, even in trays.

A mirror that reflects one side as the back or bottom supplies a deceptive secret compartment. One example is *The Mah Jongg Production Box*.

But two mirrors may be used. These mirrors bisect the angles made by each side and the back. They are placed one on each side and meet in the center of the box. Viewed from the front, with something to mask the edges of the mirrors, the box appears to be quite empty.

Many livestock productions use this principle of a secret compartment. One pigeon frame uses the space within the width of the frame, at the top, for concealment. The bottom of this compartment drops to release the pigeons into the frame proper.

Doc Nixon's Bamboo Frame makes use of the secret compartment. It is a container secured to the

back of one of the paper-covered frames used to form the front and back.

Even the hollow space within a billiard ball shell is a secret compartment. It conceals a solid ball. The shell coin, used in the old *Passe Passe Coins Trick* is a secret compartment to conceal another' coin. This, then, reminds us of dice, eggs, bottles, cups and other objects that, in shell form, conceal other similar objects.

There is an excellent variation of the mirror principle. Instead of a mirror a piece of transparent glass is used. As long as the illumination comes from the front of the glass, it reflects as a mirror, revealing the image of the sides of the box. But when the light comes from behind the plate it becomes transparent and anything behind it is visible.

By controlling the lighting, with the illumination coming from the front of the plate, at first the sides of the box are revealed as the back. In this condition the box appears to be empty. Then, as the lights in front are gradually dimmed and those behind the plate are increased in intensity, the object to be produced seems first to become visible in spectre-like lines. As the lights behind increase in intensity, with a corresponding decrease in front, the object becomes mote and more concrete in appearance. Finally, with all light coming from behind the plate, the object is substantial and real.

This transparent glass principle is called *The Pepper's Ghost* principle. In illusion work the plate glass is set at an angle to reflect something or someone offstage or below the stage level. This is not always the case. Some cabinets are built in such a manner that there is room within the sides or at the bottom for concealment of the object to be produced.

The principle is usually used with a cabinet or a box because of the utter necessity of completely controlling all light. The least amount of spilled or reflected light behind the plate will ruin the illusion.

Of course the real background and that reflected by the glass plate are identical.

While this method is particularly effective for transformations, at this time I am considering it only as an appearance. Its use for other purposes will appear in the proper divisions.

Many illusions are based wholly or partially upon this idea. But it seems curious that it has not been applied to smaller objects to any great extent.

Among the more important tricks in which this transparent mirror principle appears is *The Princess of Bahhten* illusion, originally suggested by a writer in *THE MAGIC WAND*. It is also important as the basis of Kellar's famous *Blue Room*.

Ray Gamble of Tacoma, Washington, well known to magicians of the Pacific Coast, is the possessor of a notable collection of elephants. These are not the hay-burning variety, but a nice quiet herd of figures made of practically any material that can be formed into the shape, from precious and

semi-precious stones on down the list.

It has always seemed to me that he should do an elephant trick.

He could use a cabinet made in the form of a miniature tent. The glass plate could be made large enough to give a wide line of sight from the audience. The elephant to be produced should be a couple of feet high at least-larger, if possible. Since it would be his job to carry it around, I would suggest that it be made of solid bronze.

Provision should be made for lighting control behind the glass as well as in front of the background eventually to be reflected. This reflection could come from beneath the stand upon which the tent is erected. The elephant is actually behind the glass. But at the beginning the lights are illuminating the reflected background, giving the appearance of an empty tent.

Through dimmer control the lights lower on the reflected background and come up on the cast iron Jumbo. He first appears like a wraith, taking on more and more substance until he presents the solidity that only an elephant, particularly one of foundry ancestry, could present. Meanwhile, through an electrically amplified phonograph record, gradually increasing in volume as the elephant increases in materiality, comes the theme of Rimsky-Korsakow's *Song of India*.

It is but a short step from the use of a secret compartment, as such, and the utilizing of the principle of TWO compartments, either of which may become secret. In this case, the object to be produced is secreted in one of the compartments. But the empty duplicate compartment is exhibited to the audience. Afterwards the compartment containing the object is substituted in place of the originally shown space.

This principle is an ancient one. Probably the most familiar application is in the old flap card box. The flap separates the box into two compartments. These sections utilize common sides, it is true, but they are nevertheless two separate spaces. When the box is shown empty, with the flap hiding the card to be produced, one compartment is shown. The lid is closed and the box is reversed. This automatically reveals the second section-and the card therein.

Any doubt of this principle of the two compartments is dispelled in examining a metal card box of the Roterberg type. This box consists of two compartments. The upper, and shallower, section is shown first. When the lid is closed, it unites with the upper section in such a manner that the first-shown part becomes a part of the lid. When this "lid", is lifted, the lower and previously unseen compartment is revealed.

The old *Changing Canister*, more recently converted to use as a cocktail shaker by Dr. Douglas Kelley, is another example. The canister has a top on both ends. It is round and it fits within a round cylinder, which appears to be the sides of the container, The double portion slides up and down inside the cylinder. This permits either "top" to be revealed as the top, as the corresponding "top" is hidden

within the walls of the cylinder. The sliding section is partitioned into two compartments, one for each "top".

For a production, the load is concealed in one compartment. This is pushed within the cylinder and the opposite "top" is brought into view. In use, this empty section is shown. The lid is replaced and the ends are reversed. Simultaneously, the sliding section is pushed, bringing the loaded compartment into view. This time, when the top is removed the load is produced.

The Changing Bag is another example. This has two pockets, either of which may become secret. *The Changing Tray* is similar. So also is the so-called *Master Top* as explained in Brunel White's books.

Probably one of the most complex applications of this principle of the alternating compartments is embodied in *Doc Nixon's Checker Cabinet*, although in this form it is not applied to production. This was adapted from a three-compartment caddie explained in *MODERN MAGIC*.

Another type of secret compartment is that which is carried within or behind some accessory. In its simplest form it may be merely a bag, containing the load, which is suspended behind one section of a built-up type of production box. During the assembly of the box the load is concealed behind this section, usually the top, and eventually conveyed within the box.

When the load is within the box, both sides of the section that previously concealed it may be shown.

A similar application is a production from a cylinder. With the cylinder, which is perhaps six inches in diameter and eight inches long, is a thin wooden panel about twelve inches square. The load is wrapped in a bundle that is suspended from the top edge of the panel by means of a short length of black thread. Normally the load hangs out of sight behind the panel.

But in the beginning the load is inside the cylinder and the board is lying across the top opening. The panel is picked up with its top edge downwards which allows the load to remain inside the cylinder. The panel is shown both sides, resting on its edges on the top of the cylinder. Finally the free edge of the panel is brought downwards and forward in such a manner that the load may be lifted out of the cylinder behind it. Then the tube is shown empty.

The tube is placed on the surface of the board from behind and over the load, the whole rotating forward immediately, until the panel is flat and the tube is resting upright upon it. Then the production is made from the tube.

This load may be carried from one accessory to another in the manner familiar in connection with *The Organ Pipes*. In the act of sliding one tube inside of another, the load is transferred to the tube just exhibited as empty. Usually six tubes are used. Hanging on hooks inside of five of them are the respective loads. The first cylinder is shown empty. Then, in further proof of this emptiness, this first

tube is slid over the second tube, from the bottom, picking up the "load", automatically from the second tube. The second cylinder is then exhibited and loaded in a similar manner. And so on until the last empty tube is shown.

In connection with this secret compartment principle-and it must be borne in mind that the compartment need not be rigid as a container-we encounter the idea of a secret compartment near the place of production but not necessarily in or attached to it. All that is important is that it can be reached, for this hidden supply, apparently through it.

The first example of this principle comes to mind in connection with a silk production invented within the past few years. The silks apparently are produced from a small five-sided box that rests on a light folding stand, similar to those used in cafes and hotels upon which the waiters deposit serving trays. Actually the load comes from the hollow legs of the folding stand. It is reached through the box.

In *QUALITY MAGIC,* Theodore Bamberg explains an excellent example of this idea in connection with the trick called *Multum in Parvo*. This trick is a complex combination of principles. It includes a secret compartment that is transferable to either of two boxes. In addition, there is a secret compartment built into the chair upon which the boxes stand. This second secret compartment is tilted so as to be on the back of the chair, out of sight until needed. When this load is desired, it is tilted forward, flour bin fashion, and passes into the box through the rear side.

Other examples of this remote secret compartment may be seen in the hat production, which is many years old, in which the objects are secured from a secret compartment in the table top, reached through a trap in the top of the hat. Or in a silk production, manufactured by Percy Abbott some years ago, in which silks are apparently produced from a glass of water screened by a folding square tube. Actually the load comes from the tray.

Just a step removed from the adjacent secret compartment is the "load" which moves to the place of production, screened from view. Several stage illusions utilize this idea. The person to be produced reaches the place of production via a short length of plank, over which he moves from a trap in the backdrop, or from some nearby accessory. Any method of conveying an inanimate object from a secret hiding place to the place of production comes within this class.

Now in the foregoing discussion, which has touched upon the majority of applications of the secret compartment principle as used in connection with appearances and productions, I have confined the examples cited largely to the more familiar tricks. This is because these tricks are generally well known to most magicians and for that reason serve more clearly as examples.

But in citing these examples it must be emphasized that the identical objects used, or the accessories connected with them should be changed in appearance to produce a trick that will have a new aspect to the spectators. And where pre-selected properties must be used, because of the character of the act or because of the necessity of using properties appropriate to the routine, the previously cited

examples may act as guides in connection with methods utilized with objects of similar nature. All that is necessary is to adapt the method to what you have.

MAGIC
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CHAPTER FIVE

Well now, let's see what we have unearthed so far:

Back in the second chapter we found the magician *simulating* taking a ball during the execution of *The French Drop*. We found him *dissimulating* with the left hand, the hand containing the baIl, holding this hand as if it were empty. He *disguised* this hand, disguised it as an empty one. Meanwhile he *diverted* attention from the hand actually holding the ball to the one in which he *pretended* to take it. His conduct and posture were natural to a condition of having actually taken the ball. He was confident and relaxed.

A bit further in the second chapter we discover a man *interpreting* his words, actions and implications in the light of his individual interests. He interprets them for the benefit of another person- to influence that person. He accomplishes his interpreting through skillful and convincing acting.

In the case of *The Diebox*, the performer *dissembles* when he *disguises* the nested die and shell as a die only. He resorts to maneuver in handling the die and shell so that they are not betrayed as such, so that the metal shell will not "talk." He *simulates* handling a simple die when he must cope with the more complex combination of a nested die and shell.

He *dissimulates* when he handles the diebox, *pretending* to be handling a simple container instead Qf the specially prepared device it is. Again the manipulations through which this box goes is a maneuver to prevent betrayal of its secret features.

To get the solid die into the hat he resorts to a *ruse*. Or he may use a *maneuver*, coupled with *misdirection*, to accomplish the same result.

If he elects to utilize the ruse, he must *simulate* taking out the real die in the act of removing the shell.

He must again resort to a *ruse* as an excuse for turning the back of the diebox toward the audience during the act of inserting the shell. It is a *ruse* again which supplies the cover for holding the loaded hat above the eye-level of the assisting spectator.

With the shell in the box, the magician must *pretend* it contains the die itself. He must *pretend* to shift the die from side to side during the business of opening the doors. He must *pretend* to misunderstand the demands of the spectators. He must *pretend* to be in trouble.

In the performance of the burned bill trick, explained in the last chapter, there are many psychological applications.

The magician *anticipates* the suspicions of his spectators at the climax of the trick by stressing the fairness of the selection of the particular banknote used and emphasizing its unmistakable identifications before it ever reaches his hands.

He *disguises* handing the envelope out for examination, even though it goes out for that purpose. He disguises this action to prevent premature forewarning as to its ultimate purpose. Even though it is necessary to fold the bill to its ultimate size to fit the ring box, he *disguises* the reason by apparently folding it to put it into the envelope. He even *disguises* its ultimate size so that it will not appear to be unnaturally small when placed in the envelope. He accomplishes this disguise by partially unfolding it.

He resorts to a *ruse* to gain possession of the envelope so that he will have time to prepare it with the necessary slit for stealing the bill. It is a *ruse*, apparently opening the envelope with his thumb, which *disguises* the secret manipulation of cutting the slit with the thumbnail. It is *misdirection* which diverts attention from his hands while this is being done.

The act of putting the banknote in position for ultimately stealing it is *disguised* as putting it into a secure container, the envelope. Covering the slit with the fingers and carelessly turning the face of the envelope toward the audience in the act of moistening it, *diverts* suspicion from that side of the envelope.

Concealing the telltale slit and the absence of the bill is *disguised* as the act of folding and twisting the envelope. While this is being done the performer *simulates* holding an envelope containing a bill, while he *dissimulates* with the left hand in which it is actually concealed.

He *disguises* getting rid of the bill as an act of getting a blank check. Essential movements are *confused* with non-essential detail to obscure the path of correct solution. Taking the envelope containing the blank check *simulates* taking the envelope into which the signed check was placed.

The presence of the two envelopes necessary for the exchange is *disguised* by using a packet of several envelopes. Getting rid of the envelope containing the signed check is *disguised* as merely putting aside the no longer necessary packet. Attention is diverted from the packet and *misdirected* toward the exchanged envelope.

Attention is *diverted* to the spectator, while the magician loads the bill into the ring box. This *attention control* is made possible, as has been pointed out, by having the spectator hold the burning envelope. The fire is a distraction. The performer covers his own secret operation by *disguising* it as a perfectly natural subconsciously relaxed posture.

Then he *anticipates* the critical climactic move. He reduces the degree of attention upon the actual move of loading the ring box into the sack by resorting to *monotonous ingemination* or *repetition*. By the time it is necessary to utilize the move its external aspect has become *commonplace*. It no longer attracts attention.

It is a kind of *misdirection* that *implies* to the spectators that the banknote is already in the package, when actually it is not. This is *premature consummation*. It leads the spectators to believe that the deed has been accomplished. This disarms them. Thus, they are off-guard when the objective is actually accomplished later.

The use of several wrappings is an application of *confusion*. Later, when they attempt to analyze the possibilities, the spectators are confronted with so many situations that they are bewildered. They have no idea, even if they suspect that the bill was loaded during the unwrapping, just when it was done.

The performer *disguises* taking the successive wrappings from the assistant as an act of accommodation. Actually, he is *anticipating* the vital loading move. When he does load the ring box this is *disguised* as taking the paper sack.

It is *suggestion* on the part of the performer that leads the spectator to think that something is wrapped within the ball of cord. *Inducing* the spectator to return the ball to the sack, while it is being unrolled, *is disguised* as a suggestion for controlling the ball during this operation. Actually this creates a situation which *simulates* an aspect that would be true if the ring box were actually within the ball.

The entire finish of the trick is simply a planned *ruse* to *simulate* the taking of a subsequently borrowed bill from within a multiple-wrapped package. The banknote never was within the package. The whole thing is a fraud and a hoax. *Disguise* is probably the fundamental stratagem making possible the entire effect. The final effect is something quite ordinary *disguised* as something extraordinary, largely through subtle *suggestion* on the part of the magician.

In addition to the artifices revealed in the analysis of the psychological deceptions utilized in the two tricks just discussed, there is still one principle that is important. This is the stratagem of holding out a *false objective.*

Later in this work an important trick depending upon psychological principles, Steve Shepard's *Vanishing Glass Trick*, will apply this principle of *false objective* effectively. This idea rests entirely upon giving the spectator to understand that the magician expects to accomplish a certain objective, whereas actually he intends to do something entirely different. Of course, it is a form of disguise. As such, it has been discussed before. The performer merely *disguises* his ultimate purpose.

Now let's see what we have unearthed.

These attacks upon the spectator take three general directions. Some of them are in the form of influencing the external appearance of what the performer is doing. Others are for the purpose of shaping the spectators understanding. The remainder are directed at the spectators' attention.

External appearances are influenced through simulation, dissimulation, ruse, disguise, monotony, and maneuver. While these, of course, influence understanding and attention, their strongest impact is upon the senses. No conscious thought effort on the part of the spectator is required. These factors simply accentuate that which seems to be.

Simulation is a bewildering way of saying something is made to look like what it is *not*. Webster defines *simulation* as the act of assuming the appearance of, without the reality-feigning. When one *simulates* there is an implication of the assumption of a false appearance. This suggests an attempt to make something seem other than what it really is by imitating the latter's external identifying indications such as characteristics, marks, symbols or other signs.

As pointed out previously, the performer *simulates* taking the ball during the execution of *The French Drop*. He assumes the appearance of taking the ball, without actually doing so. He feigns, or falsely represents, taking the ball. It is a false appearance. *He does this by imitating the true action*. The true action is a simple one. It involves grasping the ball and carrying it away, with the performer's attention following the presence of the ball. This perfectly natural action involves no peculiar maneuvers of either hand. It calls for no peculiar facial expressions, no wild or eccentric wavings of the arms, no florid gestures of exaggerated grace.

Were flailing arms, peculiar tics and other external singularities evident during such a simple-and natural-action, the observer would instantly, even instinctively, conclude that the subject of his observation was mentally unbalanced, a character or-of all things-a magician. By these signs ye shall know them!

It is easy to confuse *simulation* and *dissimulation*. But they mean entirely opposite purposes.

Dissimulation means the act of concealing the real fact by pretense. When a person dissimulates it suggests that he conceals *that which is true*. It is an act of hiding something, of covering up, of withholding knowledge. It keeps something secret. It hides the presence of the ball in the left hand, as an

example, during *The French Drop.*

Consider the distinction in the two words. *Simulation* is a positive act. It *shows* a false picture. Dissimulation is a negative act. It *hides* a true picture. One reveals. The other conceals. What the first reveals is false. What the second conceals is true. They are exact opposites. *Simulate* means *similar* to what one is not. *Dissimulate* means *dissimilar* to what one is. Addison and Steele said in *TATLER. Simulation is a pretense of what is not, and dissimulation a concealment of what is.*

So, during the execution of *The French Drop*, while the right hand simulates taking the ball, the left hand dissimulates simultaneously. This left hand hides the presence of the ball. Like the right hand's simulation, it is a false appearance. But this is all they have in common. *The dissimulation is accomplished by imitating the false condition.*

Notice that the right hand imitates the true condition while the left hand imitates the false condition.

This action, too, is simple. The false condition here is one of emptiness. There is no reason for any attention being given to an empty hand. Apparently that hand has served its purpose for the moment. An empty hand is not clutched tight spasmodically. It is not held tense. It is not fostered and guarded with anxiety. An empty hand is relaxed. And it is disregarded.

Admittedly both of the stratagems are forms of disguise. As a matter of fact, all forms of disguise are either simulation or dissimulation. Disguises either reveal a false appearance or conceal the true picture. So, since this term includes both of the specific stratagems, we shall use the word *disguise* as a generalized term for either where a nice distinction in meaning is not required.

A *ruse* is a crafty expedient to divert attention from the magician's real purpose. It is cunning and skillful and is designed to deceive the spectator. It is advantageous to the performer, and it is apt and suitable to the objective in view. It is a suitable means to accomplish an end. It gives a false impression by diverting attention from the magician's real purpose or by making what is untrue seem true. Prom the latter sense, all magic is a ruse. All tricks are designed to make what is untrue seem true.

But in the specific sense, as used in magic, the ruse is a feint that distracts the spectator's attention from the magician's real objective. Thus, in the case of finding an excuse for putting the nested die and shell in the hat, during the performance of *The Diebox Trick*, the performer gives a false impression. He finds a plausible *alternative* reason for his action. This diverts attention from his real reason, since knowledge of his real intent, on the part of his spectators, would foster disaster.

The ruse must be plausible and convincing. If it is not, it ceases to be a ruse. A blundering ruse becomes an attractor of attention. It attracts attention to the performer's real objective. It creates suspicion and intensifies scrutiny whereas its real purpose is to divert attention and lull suspicions. A ruse that fails is an exposure of the magician's true purpose.

When the performer is confronted with a situation, such as the necessity of turning the back of the diebox toward the audience when he inserts the shell die-a situation which must attract suspicion because the handling of the box is not natural-he must resort to a ruse. He must provide a plausible alternative reason for turning the box. This is necessary because the real reason must be concealed. Knowledge of the real reason would reveal the secret of a vital part of the trick.

So the ruse is selected from a list of plausible excuses, all of which are untrue. The ruse makes it possible for the magician to do an unnatural thing naturally. The ruse also makes it possible for the performer to do a natural thing under a guise other than the true one. In the latter case he conceals the real reason with a plausible false one.

Invariably the ruse is a plausible, but untrue, reason, or action conveying a reason, for concealing the true purpose for doing some-thing. It *must* be convincing.

Monotony may be defined as an intentional repetition of what is apparently the same action. After a while this action becomes commonplace to the spectators. It ceases to attract close attention. After it has become commonplace, this action is utilized to accomplish some secret objective. It is effective because the action is not scrutinized closely. In fact, the action is often entirely ignored by the spectators.

This is an act of nondirection by obliteration.

Thus, the repeated taking of the wrappings at the finish of the bill trick obliterates, to the spectators, the significance of the vital loading move. They completely ignore it.

But it is seldom that an action or a thing may be made so inconspicuous as to be obliterated from attention. The process takes too long. Therefore, there is only one thing left to do when the performer must be rid of too close attention on some operation. He must divert this attention to something else. He diverts the attention *by temporarily substituting a new, and stronger, interest somewhere else*.

In the bill trick the performer misdirects the attention of the spectators by diverting the interest to the spectator. Later in the trick he diverts attention from the packet of envelopes and concentrates interest upon the exchanged One. During the action of loading the bill into the ring box, the interest and attention are swung to the burning envelope.

Invariably, substituting a new, and stronger, interest somewhere else diverts attention.

The maneuver is a series of movements or actions. It is an adroit and dexterous management and manipulation of circumstances and actions. It is a series of actions or situations, even in a difficult or dangerous situation, handled with skill and address. It reveals sureness and lightness of handling and planning without suggesting resistance to overcome. It is an expertly and neatly handled series of

movements which have been planned with nicety of perception and tact.

In the alternative method of dropping the die in the hat, during *The Diebox Trick*, the *maneuver* is planned in complete detail. The nested die and shell are held in the right hand so the left will have to take up the hat. The table upon which the hat rests is placed at the magician's right purposely. With the nested die and shell in the right hand, it is necessary for the performer to reach across the body for the hat. The right hand clears the way by moving upwards. There is another reason for the right hand to be elevated. This is so the solid die may be dropped into the hat at the exact instant the hat is immediately below the nested die and shell. This part of the maneuver, then, of course, is a ruse.

Continuing the maneuver: At the moment the hat is below the die, the performer diverts attention away from them by speaking to a spectator. When the attention has swung, the magician allows the die to slip into the hat. This is done without noticeable delay in moving the hat and without betraying movements of the right or left hands. Both hands must move as if the hat were still empty and as if the die were still in the hand, as, indeed, the presence of the shell suggests in the latter case. This phase of the maneuver is dissimulation.

In a convincing and plausible manner, the hat is then elevated and handed to the spectator to hold.

From this as an example, it may be seen that *the maneuver is an artfully planned and skillfully executed process or course of action, preplanned to influence appearances, apparently extemporaneous, without any suggestion of resistance to overcome*.

Summing up what we have found, we may say that external appearances are influenced by:

1. actions or objects which show a false picture;
3. actions or objects which conceal a true state of affairs:
5. substituting false reasons in order to conceal the magician's true purposes;
7. lulling the spectators' attention;
9. by diverting the spectators' attention; and
11. by planning and executing courses of action or procedure, toward a definite objective, artfully and skillfully.

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CHAPTER SIX

The spectator's understanding of what he sees the magician do is influenced by many factors. These include the performer's interpretations of his own actions, the implications conveyed, the ideas induced, what the performer pretends, the confusion introduced, the suggestions of the magician, the degree of dissembling, what is anticipated by the performer, the false scents and red herrings, the feints invoke4 and all such artifices and stratagems.

External appearances of all kinds, of course, influence the spectator's understanding. This is because they control the factors leading up to it. From this viewpoint, the artifices listed as having to do with external appearance belong here also. But the external appearances, themselves, are directed more specifically at the senses. The aspects thus set up undoubtedly influence what the spectator understands. Their effect upon the understanding, however, is more indirect, although no less powerful in result.

Now we take up the weapons with which the magician attacks the spectator's mind.

Interpretation, as I have pointed out before in this series, *is the explanation, construction or sense given by the performer* to *the* spectator, in *the light of the magician's individual interests, purposes and objectives.*

This is probably the most potent individual weapon at the disposal of the magician. Through it, it becomes possible for him to justify and explain an action that is suspicious or even revealing. It diverts suspicion. Interpretation makes it possible to convert an operative action into a mere gesture. It causes the significant to become insignificant.

The thug, who seeks to entice his victim within reach, uses interpretation. He pulls his surly features into an expression of friendliness, and the hand that fists the blackjack waves a gesture of invitation to approach. Interpretation makes the bait look like a hearty and tasty meal. It converts an act

of burglary into a mere social call.

In *The Diebox Trick*, when the magician first puts the nested die and shell into the hat, he interprets this action, for *the benefit of the spectator*, as a mere bit of comedy by-play. Secretly, to the magician, it is a vital operation. Ostensibly, to the spectator, it is a trifling and even accidental incident. Later, he interprets taking out the shell as taking out the solid die.

When he turns the back of the diebox toward the audience, in order not to reveal the shell die, he interprets this as the showing of the back of the box to the spectators. As the sliding weight within the box thumps from side to side, he interprets the noise as that made by a sliding block of wood.

Interpretation turns up repeatedly in the burned bill trick explained. He interprets handing out the envelope for examination as a touch of light comedy. He interprets regaining this envelope, so that he may make the secret slit, as more comedy. He interprets, by suggestion, the slitting of the envelope as an idle gesture of opening it. He interprets covering the slit as the act of holding the envelope. He interprets stealing the bill as the act of sealing the flap securely.

The spectators are led to believe that the performer is but getting a check blank when actually he is disposing of the bill. The performer interprets loading the bill into the ring box as an idle subconscious pose. According to the performer's interpretation, also by suggestion, the bill is already in the multi-wrapped package when it is given to the spectator. The act of taking the successive wrappings from the spectator is interpreted as an act of accommodation, whereas it is vitally necessary. The actual loading act is interpreted as a mere act of accommodation.

After the ring box is loaded, the performer's suggestion, to put the ball of cord in the bag while unrolling it, is interpreted as an incidental afterthought. It is skillful interpretation that causes the spectators to believe that the ring box comes from the ball of cord.

Implications and suggestions are indirect methods of bringing something before the spectator's mind. They vary in their degree of indirection.

A suggestion puts an idea into the spectator s mind as the result of an association of ideas or the awakening of a train of thought, often a suggestion requires delicate perceptions, although this is not always the case. The idea is stimulated less directly than by a formal statement. It may arise as the result of a partial statement, an incidental allusion, an illustration, a question and the like.

An implication is a form of suggestion. But it is a bit more direct. It is a hint of an idea, a thought, or a meaning. It comes as the result of a statement, a situation, a word or the like. It forms a part of the suggestion itself, although this is not always obvious. It often connotes the need of an inference. It gives ground for a conclusion to be drawn from the facts or evidence presented. Sometimes it arises as the result of a significant act, gesture or token of the meaning intended.

During *The Diebox Trick,* after the die and shell have been placed in the hat, when the shell is removed the hat is empty by implication. Perhaps the hat may have been shown empty prior to introducing the die and shell therein. Since what was placed in the hat has been removed, it is inferred that the hat is once more empty. The significant act, the removal of the shell. is the implication which gives ground for the conclusion drawn. The stimulus is not direct.

It is a curious fact, but one which every magician of experience knows to be true, that a direct statement in this regard, at this stage, would probably be disastrous.

Suppose, as he took the shell from the hat, the magician were to say, "Now that I've taken the die from the hat, the hat is empty." Few spectators would believe him. As a matter of fact, the direct statement in regard to the emptiness of the hat would act indirectly. as a suggestion. The statement might be direct as to the hat's being empty. But it would be indirect as to the truth of the statement. Immediately it would initiate a train of thought in the spectator's mind.

The average spectator would probably reason something like this:

"Since you bring up the *subject, is* it empty? Had you *not* found it *necessary* to say that *the* hat was empty, I would have assumed *that* to be *the* case. Certainly, if it were *empty,* really, you wouldn't have thought it necessary to emphasize the *fact*. *And* if you desire to emphasize it, why don't you actually show the *hat* to be empty? *Probably because* you *don't dare*. *I* believe there is something still in the hat."

Just that situation, often done by bunglers, has ruined many a trick.

This is *a* clear illustration of *the* power and value *of the indirect* demonstration.

Probably it never enters the *average* spectator's mind, *but the* whole fundamental basis of *the* burned bill trick rests upon implication. Since the bill has been placed in the envelope, and since the envelope, and presumably its contents, has been consumed, it follows that the banknote was destroyed by *fire*. Thus, the destruction of the bill is inferred through implication. That this is an effective expedient is proven by the number of years it has been in use. Rarely, if ever, do the spectators realize that they haven't actually seen the banknote burned.

The magician uses suggestion, during the bill trick, when the spectator takes the ball of cord from the paper bag. Substantially he says, or implies, "Unroll the ball and see what's wrapped up inside." He does not say it directly, but be suggests that there is something wrapped within the cord. You may note that the spectator's idea that something is within the ball is not deduced from circumstances. An inference is not necessary. The performer has not actually said something is wrapped in the cord. He has said the same thing indirectly. He has planted the idea with the spectator by an indirect statement.

Ultimately, it is through suggestion that the spectator believes the ring box, and the bill it

contains, comes from the ball of cord. He can reach his conclusion in no other way. The bill actually never is in the package.

It is evident that suggestion is less direct than a statement or demonstration.

For example: Here are three ways of saying that a hat is empty. The direct statement would be, "The hat is empty." The suggestion would say, "We have plenty of room in the hat." And the implication would sound something like this: "We must find something to put ill the hat."

In demonstration form, the three ways of showing the hat empty might be like this: Direct, actually turn the hat so the audience may see inside. By suggestion, take the shell out and invert the hat without showing the inside. By implication, take the shell out and ignore the hat.

In magic, it is utterly impossible to force the spectator's reason or judgment directly. This assumes, of course, that the spectator is opposed to the magician's objectives. Normally, where it is desired that someone else be moved to do something or to follow a certain course, that person is persuaded or induced. But persuasion implies an appeal to the feelings or desires. It impels action, often without thought. In magic, the factors do not seem to be present to make practical use of passions and feelings.

Rather, by the nature of the type of entertainment, *the* spectator must *believe he has made his own decision*. This makes it necessary for the magician to use inducement rather than persuasion. When the spectator is induced, it is implied that he has been temporarily opposed, that his reason or judgment has been influenced, and that the decision has been made through the spectator's choice rather than that it was forced upon him.

So, in the burned bill trick, if the magician can induce the spectator to return the ball of cord to the sack for the unrolling, it is much more convincing to the spectators. If he persuades him or forces him to return the ball to the sack, it is evident to the spectators that the magician has made the decision. This suggests that the action is necessary. But if the spectator seems to make this decision himself, and if it seems unimportant to the magician, there is no significant emphasis upon the action. Since the spectator makes the decision, the fact that it is his decision becomes evident to the audience.

When the performer pretends. he asserts or implies something false or *deceitful as being real* or *true*. Pretense *is* an *act* that is performed. *It is an* appearance *that* is assumed. *It is a statement* that *is made*. *It is a situation that is shown* or implied. *All of* these *are* done in the hope that they will convince the spectators of their truth or reality. *Actually* they are *false* and untrue.

The pretense is a bald misrepresentation. It calls black white. It may be a blend of truth and falsehood, but it is invariably used to deceive. Pretense conceals *a* weakness. It also serves to hide a fault. It is extremely important in deception.

In *The Diebox Trick* the magician uses pretense to convince the spectator that the real die is in the box. He uses it to cause the spectator to think that he shifts the die from side to side. He uses it to cause the spectators to believe that he misunderstands their demands. It makes him seem in trouble.

Confusion is the mixing and blending of details so that it is impossible to distinguish the significant from the insignificant. It is intended to throw the spectator off-step mentally so that he cannot think clearly or act intelligently. It is a state or condition in which things are not in their right places, or arranged in their right relations to each other. It involves such mixing and mingling that clear demarcation or distinction is obliterated.

During the burned bill trick, the business with the blank check is introduced to confuse the spectator in his attempts to follow a straight path to ultimate solution of the deception. Moves necessary with the operation become confused with moves necessary with the nonessential portion of the trick. A false scent or a red herring would be intended to induce the spectator to follow a false trail. With confusion, there are so many paths available, none of which is clear, that the spectator cannot follow along.

While the use of the device of taking the successive wrappings from the spectator, in the bill trick, is a clear and true example of repetition and monotony. it is also an example of confusion. Later, when the spectator attempts to analyze just what has happened. he is confronted with a bewildering and confusing series of actions.

The spectator is dependent upon clues in his attempts to analyze a deception. If they are all clear and unmistakable, whether or not the true solution is found depends entirely upon the deductive and inductive powers of the individual.

Deductive reasoning is from the general to the particular. It proceeds from a general principle through an admitted instance to a conclusion. In deduction, if the general rule is true, and the special case falls under the rule, the conclusion is certain.

A spectator's deductive chain might go something like this: *All hats used by magicians have false tops. This is a hat. A magician uses it. It is not shown not to have a false top. Therefore, it has a false top*.

Inductive reasoning goes from the particular to the general. It proceeds from a number of collated instances, through some attribute common to them all, thence to a general principle. Induction can ordinarily give no more than a probable conclusion because we can never be certain that we have collected all examples.

A spectator's inductive chain might go something like this: *I saw a magician once who had a black top hat. I discovered that the hat had a false top. A friend once told me he examined a derby hat used by a magician. It was gray. It, too, had a false top. A magician once told me that he always used a*

hat with a false top. I've seen hats with false tops listed in magic catalogs. Therefore, I conclude that all hats used by magicians, regardless of the style of hat or regardless of the color of the hat, have false tops.

Both of the above illustrations of chains of reasoning demonstrate two things. They demonstrate the respective methods of reasoning. They also demonstrate that neither necessarily results in correct conclusions.

The magician may materially assist the spectator in reaching a wrong conclusion. The spectator is guided by clues. The magician may deliberately misguide the spectator by baiting him with false clues. These, like the well-known pretense of placing the egg under the arm in *The Egg Bag Trick*, are planned and intended to take the spectator along a false path. They are similar to the false trails set up by a *fugitive* in order *to* avoid capture. Like the red herring, they obscure the correct scent by reason of their very potency.

Naturally, all of this discussion, all of these examples of attacks upon the senses and understanding, impress upon one the complexity and intricacy of expert deception. It is evident that the problem becomes more and more confused as we pull the tricks themselves apart. This is because the trick itself is the tool. It is the weapon with which the spectator is attacked. Let us look at the object of this attack, the spectator. By discovering his weaknesses, we are in better position to shape and plan the tactics to be used against him.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

The intended dupe of the magician's wiles is, of course, the spectator. He is the objective. All of the performer's endeavor is aimed at deceiving him. He is the obstacle the magician encounters. In him are combined the formidable barriers the deceiver must breach and the very weaknesses that make him vulnerable.

It is the magician's task to learn how to avoid the barriers and to attack the weak spots.

lt might be interesting to look at things from his viewpoint, for the moment. What the spectator sees and what the average magician *thinks* this spectator sees might be considerably surprising, even revealing.

Deception is actually magic in reverse. What the spectators see is magic—presuming that the performer's efforts have been successful. The identical performance, from the magician's viewpoint, is deception. The spectator sees things that appear to be impossible. The magician sees happenings that are not at all mysterious. When the performer does *The Egg Bag Trick*, the spectator believes he sees an egg taken from an empty bag. The magician, from his viewpoint, merely takes an egg from a secret compartment in the bag.

So, in order that the operation may become deception, it is mandatory that the magician realizes at all times what the spectator sees—and *understands*.

The source of the spectator's experience, magical or otherwise, is his perceptions. Everything he undergoes is perceived, in some manner, through his senses. The sum total of his conscious life comes to him through the five senses, but more particularly through the senses of seeing and hearing.

The spectator's senses can convey to him only what is seen, heard, felt, tasted, or smelled. The egg and the egg bag are seen. *What he* sees the performer do with them comes through his eyes. What the performer says *about them* comes to the spectator through his ears.

But the mind, not *the* eye, sees. *The* mind, not the ear, *hears. The* mind, not the fingers, feels, So it *is* with *all* of *the senses.* Ultimately the sense impression is a function of the mind. Through *these* senses, the mind is this spectator's means of direct acquaintance with that which is external to him.

But his perceptive sense includes both awareness and consciousness.

He is *aware* of something that is outside of *himself. He* is aware of this through his own *vigilance* in observation. Or it may come through information. Awareness is the result of drawing inferences. It is a deriving by reasoning or implication, a concluding from facts or premises, or a finding as a consequence, conclusion or probability. These come from what he sees, hears, feels and acquires from the other senses. But the mind, too, is involved in the process deeply.

So, when the magician shows this spectator the egg, the latter's awareness carries him much further than the mere act of seeing. He recognizes it as an egg because he is familiar with eggs through past experience. He knows eggs to be definitely material objects with certain definite identifying characteristics. He knows the egg would be broken if it were to be struck against the band as the magician strikes the bag into which it is placed. He knows the egg would fall from the bag, when the bag is inverted, if the egg were inside. He also knows anything heavy that might be inside of a cloth bag, would fall out, if the bag were inverted. Well, here we are already, going into the force of gravity. Before we could finish, ultimately we might possibly explore a considerable portion of his education and personal experience.

There is another factor present while the spectator is perceiving. This is *consciousness*. Even while this spectator is aware of what he is experiencing, he is also sensible to an inward state. This sensibility to an inward state or an outward fact is *consciousness*. It is a step beyond awareness. It applies particularly to that which is felt within this spectator. But since this spectator is conscious, as well, of what he sees, hears, feels and otherwise apprehends, these, too, enter his mind. This, his consciousness of a thing, may range from mere recognition *to direct attention*.

It is that peculiar function of being aware of an inward state that particularly interests us here. *This is because the spectator, influenced by past experience, does not necessarily believe all he sees*. This is especially true at a magician's demonstration. The spectator comes to the performance prejudiced against what he is to see.

Thus, if the performer were to handle the egg in a manner unlike the way in which an egg is usually handled the spectator would be conscious of a jarring note. The same might be said of the magician's remarks in connection with the egg. If he were to refer to it in some manner so as to suggest that, perhaps, the egg were not an ordinary egg, the spectator would be conscious of that incongruity.

It is curious to note just how strongly these remarks affect the spectator's mental processes. If the magician were to hold the egg up and say, "This is a most extraordinary egg," the spectators would take the opposite viewpoint. They would be certain the egg was quite ordinary. But if the performer were to say, "This is an ordinary egg," the spectators would immediately suspect it.

It is almost a safe rule that the spectators invariably disbelieve what the magician says to them, *if what he says seems to be important to him.* That is one reason why direct statements are usually avoided by skillful magicians, when an important phase of the operation of the trick is involved.

The more skillful magicians will make direct statements only in connection with unimportant details or when their direct statements can be and are substantiated.

On the other hand, the skillful magician relies upon indirect methods where something vital is concerned. He handles, and refers to, the important thing as if it were of no consequence. He avails himself of the spectators' experience, habits, and familiarity with things, to gain his point. He allows the spectator's consciousness to infer that the egg, or bag, is ordinary. He doesn't arouse the spectator's suspicions.

The deception the magician seeks to accomplish is an attack upon the spectator's mind. Specifically, it *is* an attack upon *his* understanding.

Since *the* spectator's understanding is what he learns through the senses, influenced by his reasoning, it is obvious that the magician *must influence what the spectator s senses convey to the* latter.

Of course, the magician must also influence the *factors* that contribute to the spectator's understanding.

The ideas in a spectator's mind arise from stimuli. A stimulus evokes or induces a response or a reaction. Without these stimuli, there is no conscious thought. The responses resulting from these stimuli are matters of the spectator's heredity, environment, training, experience, interests, disposition, knowledge, education and many other complex factors.

Merely placing unnecessary stress upon the egg or the bag stimulates the mind to activity.

Normally, the spectator's mind wanders around, picking up ideas and thoughts from varying stimuli. These stimuli may come from conscious or subconscious suggestion. Often this is a matter of habit. Frequently the course the mind may take is the result of an association of ideas, a chain of thought or a path plotted by successive stimuli. These are responses which in themselves become stimuli for still other responses.

Frequently it best suits the purpose of the magician not to disturb this normal chain thinking.

The spectator's understanding is no minor adversary. This understanding is the sum of the mental powers by which he has acquired, retained and extended his knowledge. It is his power of apprehending relations. It is also his power of making inferences from these relations. What learning he has, naturally, comes from some source. His understanding includes what he knows from being told. It includes what he has received as implied or intended. It includes an ability to take or assume things as tacitly meant. His understanding knows through information he has received. It exercises power of comprehension.

When the magician does his trick with the egg and the little black bag, he has this magnificent mental reality to encounter. It cannot be lightly dismissed.

The information that this spectator's understanding acquires comes from what is seen, what is heard and what is derived through the other senses. It also includes what is implied or suggested. It comes from reading, observation and instruction.

The acquirements of a lifetime are available to this spectator at the very moment the magician brings out the egg and the little black bag.

The faculty or power of understanding is intellect. Obviously, it is the spectator's power to understand that which is immediately presented to him in sense perception. The magician usually is aware of this. But the spectator's intellect also includes those things known by process of reasoning. It is an assemblage of faculties that is concerned with knowledge. Magicians often overlook this latter phase.

Included in the spectator's mind are all forms of conscious intelligence. This is activated intellect, the ability to exercise the higher mental functions. It is also a readiness of comprehension. To a varying degree, this spectator is a creature of thought. Don't overlook the important fact that the spectator has knowledge of things that may not even be obvious or apparent, for some reason. This knowledge comes from information that has been given him, from what he observes, and from his inferences based upon his experience.

From the above foundation-an extremely simplified one, admittedly-we might undertake to construct our structure of deception.

The spectator sees the magician himself. He is aware of the performer's appearance, his dress, his features, and his posture. He is conscious of the type of person he seems to be, of his style of talking, of his apparent educational background. He even realizes something of the performer's disposition. Yet much of this information comes to the spectator subconsciously. The mind has a way of putting together clues from here and there, clues which definitely establish this performer as an individual.

It is an automatic process, the specific details of which the spectator is totally unaware.

Suddenly ask this spectator what kind of person the performer *is—his* appearance, *his*

mannerisms, his disposition and other characteristics. The *spectator will answer readily* enough. He *will* also reveal much more than the details the eyes have perceived. Mixed with what the eye brings to him will be opinions and conclusions possible only through mental activity, coupled with what he has observed.

Take the egg we have referred to, for example: It might be the proper size, the proper shape and the proper color. Yet this spectator may be conscious that it is not a real egg. *His* conclusion has been formed through subtle details that he, himself, might not be able to identify. The same might hold true of the bag. This spectator might have convictions that the bag is not as simple as it seems. These are not necessarily convictions based upon mere suspicions. They may be convictions created by intangible details, which when brought together, subconsciously influence the spectator's opinion and conclusion.

This might be caused by the performer's manner of handling the egg or the bag. While he is viewing the performer, this spectator is, of course, seeing the manner in which the magician conducts himself with the properties he uses.

Definitely a more revealing part of the presentation than the mere appearance of the magician and his properties is this manner of the performer.

The senses merely convey to the spectator what the magician looks like and his conduct. The performer may handle these properties confidently, naturally, and with assurance, or his attitude might be unnatural, showing lack of confidence, and with too-great care in handling things about which the performer is plainly worried.

The sense picture also includes what the magician explains, as well as what he does not explain. It includes his auxiliary remarks, his posture, his gestures, his inflection and all other details to which the senses are attuned.

But in the background-weighing, classifying, accepting and rejecting, comparing with past experience-is the judgment and understanding of this spectator. He detects an overtone. He is aware of a relaxation or a tension. He senses confidence, and its lack. He recognizes the natural and unnatural. He concludes what he believes to be true, to be dubious, and to be untrue.

And much the same holds true of the properties employed by the performer. They may seem ordinary or palpably special. They may appear to be simple, complex, or even suspicious and doubtful. What the magician does with them-and to them-may be natural or unnatural. Many details go to form a conclusion.

These properties have shape, size, quality, color and meaning. They may be strange or familiar, ordinary or extraordinary, real or imitation, disguised or undisguised, even free or restricted.

Coupled with the performer's conscious conduct is always the mannerisms that come

subconsciously. These unconscious actions, remarks, inflections and the like are often more revealing than what the magician sets forth consciously.

Interlocked with the general appearance of the performer and his properties, part of the fabric of the mental concept shaped from the magician's behavior, manner and mannerisms, are the words the performer uses and their delivery. These, too, are an inseparable portion of that which the spectator takes in. Like a chemical change, these basic ingredients—appearance of the performer, appearance of the properties, what the performer does, his manner, what is said, how it is said—all of these basic ingredients combine to form an entirely new, an entirely separate entity. They cannot be separated without taking from this final, complete concept which is formed in the spectator's mind.

Nothing can be taken from *all* of the factors which go together to form the spectator's final mental image. This is because each part is necessary to complete and color the final result. To the spectator, the details are not separate. Various stimuli, in various ways provoke various responses. Without the exact combination of stimuli, in all particulars, the specific concept received by the spectator cannot be the same.

Let me illustrate this: The performer shows the egg bag empty, and apparently quite ordinary, in the usual manner. The egg is placed in the bag. Ultimately the bag is shown empty. Suppose, now, that. in placing the egg in the bag, the performer has difficulty in finding the opening to the secret compartment. Realizing that the magician is fumbling with the bag, probably sensing a momentary feeling of panic on the part of the performer, the spectator's attention is centered on the bag. This stimulates an idea that perhaps the magician is seeking a hidden pocket. Perhaps an astute spectator, having received the clue he needs, actually can follow the performer's movements, even though cloaked in the bag. This spectator has imagination He is shrewd. He is discerning. Having received the clue he needs, the spectator really sees the magician find the pocket and deposit the egg.

Now, if the performer is using a familiar routine, when this magician brings out his hand and makes the feint as if hiding the egg beneath his armpit, this astute spectator is not deceived at all. He recognizes it for the by-play it is.

Suppose, in contrast, the magician had not found it necessary to fumble. Suppose, instead, he had practiced this move so often and so thoroughly that it became one single, simple, unsuspicious movement. So the astute spectator does not receive the absolutely essential clue he needs. There is no stimulus to direct his thought to the secret pocket inspiration. When the magician's closed hand comes from the bag and makes the sweep toward the armpit, the spectator's attention follows right along, vigilantly. Now his attention is directed to the armpit, with confidence that he has caught the performer. His interest is centered upon the armpit with the same confidence, instead of upon the bag.

But this is only one change that has influenced the spectator's viewpoint. Throughout the presentation of every trick there are hundreds of factors that shape the course of the spectator's thinking. These may range from the obvious and significant to the most intangible and trivial. All of these details,

even the most minor, even the very order in which they occur, shape the spectator's ultimate concept.

The expert deceptions, knowing this, takes advantage of the fact. He deliberately colors all details, both major and minor, to accomplish his purpose.

MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

CHAPTER EIGHT

We take up the performer's appearance to the spectator first.

In this work we are concerned only with that aspect which will act as a stimulus to the spectator's thought, in connection with the deception the magician is attempting. In the respect that the performer's first appearance will influence the Spectator's anticipation of the character of the former's action—gestures, mannerisms and the like—his general appearance is important.

If this performer is attired in good taste, if he is clean and well-groomed, if he conducts himself in a manner which reflects education, breeding and consideration, the spectator will prepare himself to expect postures, gestures, handling of his properties and general conduct *natural* to what the performer seems to be.

This establishes the *norm*, the pattern. Therefore, as long as what the spectator sees conforms to this *norm*, because it is what the spectator expects and anticipates, the magician will be in character to him.

Departures from this established pattern or standard will catch the spectator's attention.

They will catch the spectator's attention for the same reason that anything unusual will do likewise. Such departures from the usual, similar variations from this *norm*, become prominent because they disturb the harmony and unity of the whole. They are out of character. There is a jarring note. Dissonance results. This discord must attract specific notice.

The same may be said of any character that the performer may choose to adopt. This character establishes the pattern. The spectator adjusts himself to expect what would be normal to that type of

character. As long as what he sees conforms to the normal, natural, unified picture, the spectator, whether he is sympathetic to the character or not, will see a harmonious whole.

But let discord appear in this harmony and the spectator's vigilant attention is immediately attracted. This holds true even though the particular feature itself may be trivial, or even intangible.

This is stressed particularly because such irregularities destroy naturalness and conviction. When naturalness disappears, and when something unnatural is evident, the spectator's attention immediately becomes vigilant and alert. In the normal course of events, this is disastrous to deception.

Here is an example where an unnatural appearance on the part of the performer would awaken the suspicions of his spectators: The magician is smartly groomed. He is polished, refined, confident, poised. It would be natural that his costume be well fitting and smartly cut. But this particular magician desires to produce a large rabbit. He wants to use a rabbit bag under his arm. If the dress suit he wears were to be shaped to his contours, there would be an unsightly bulge. This would be visible. It would act as a stimulus to the minds of the spectators.

Conversely, if the magician were to wear a dress suit somewhat too big for him, in order to accommodate the bulk of the rabbit, again the suit would be a variation from the norm. Attention would be attracted to it again.

Well, what is the solution?

In this case, if you desire a smart appearance, if you want to seem smartly tailored, well groomed, polished, refined and to show all of the other attributes of this type of performer, some concessions must be made. It is fundamental that you appear natural. Part of the essentials of a smart performer, as was stressed repeatedly in *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS*, is smart tailoring. Since smart tailoring does not permit unnatural bulges or too-large clothing, the body load of the rabbit must be eliminated, unless its bulk can be disposed of on some part of the performer's anatomy where it cannot be seen.

I wish to stress that this advice is not given here now in connection with the magician's desire to sell himself and his personality to the audience. This would be showmanship. But in this work it is

stressed because it is a variation from the *norm*. It attracts undesirable attention from the viewpoint of the magic. Definitely, it threatens the deceptive feature.

Naturally, another concession is possible for the magician in this example. He may change the slant of his character. He may adopt a character to which bulges or too-large clothing would be natural. Then, because it conforms to the *norm*, the spectator will assume it to be part of the character and will not suspect it in connection with the deception, *providing the magician does not do something else which will cause it to be suspected*.

Think of some performer you know. Think of one who habitually wears too-loose clothing—perhaps one who is not meticulous about keeping it carefully pressed. It might be possible that this performer frequently carries about with him, in his clothing, bulky, bulging packages. Now, if he were to appear before you, loaded for the rabbit production, because his appearance would be natural to you, there would be no cause for special attention or suspicion on your part because of the hidden bulk. By the time he produced the rabbit—providing, of course, he did not prepare you as to what to expect—the trick would be over before his natural bulky appearance could attract your special attention.

Now think of the same situation in connection with someone you know, someone who dresses smartly in well-fitted clothing. Would you notice that bulge? Or that too-voluminous coat? Before he started his production, wouldn't you be suspecting that the bulge might represent some load? And when he started in on the preliminaries, wouldn't you watch the bulge? I'm quite certain you would.

Think of this in terms of performers that you have seen, magicians, perhaps, that you don't know so well. Would not that same reaction occur?

This is a splendid example of the performer's appearance being definitely connected with the deception's success. It is connected through its effect in creating detrimental stimuli to the spectator's mind. As a potential creator of thought stimuli, the performer's appearance definitely enters into the psychology of deception.

Another thing that can be seen in connection with the performer is the manner in which he handles his properties. Again, this handling must be natural and in character. If the operation of a certain trick requires that the magician handle it in an uncharacteristic or unnatural manner, this variation from the norm will attract attention. It will attract attention where, in the normal course of events, no special attention would be stimulated.

As an example: Suppose the magician were one who made all movements with .the utmost of economy of motion. During his normal actions there would be no extravagant gestures, no quick motions, no exaggerated postures. Now we arrive at a situation where it is necessary for this man to execute the pass. As is well known, generally there are three ways in which this move may be done.

It may be accomplished through sheer speed in one blindingly deft movement. It may be done deliberately and slowly, while the attention of the spectator is attracted elsewhere, or it may be disguised as some other movement. The third way, naturally, is just to do the sleight as rapidly as possible without any attempt to cover it.

If the performer's normal movements are deliberate, slow and economical, the brilliantly fast move will be noticed. It will be noticed for the same reason that any other quick motion will be noticed. It will be away from the norm. It will be in contrast with other moves the performer makes and it will, therefore, be prominent. On the other hand, if the performer has been making quick pointless motions, generally resembling the character of the pass movement, the particular motions of the pass will not be

especially prominent.

However, quick pointless nervous motions are not advisable because usually they denote a nervous person whose behavior would be disturbing to the audience. Notice that I'm not advising against building up a background of such movements because they will lessen the *deception*. On the contrary, in the case of the fast, uncovered pass, they would be helpful. I'm advising against the cultivation of a nervous manner for a reason entirely outside the scope of this work.

It is completely true that the spectator will be unable to understand the fast pass. But he will see it. Seeing it, although he may not know exactly what its purpose may be, the degree of deception to him will be lessened. To some types of persons this will be completely satisfying. Having seen the movement, they are certain they know how the trick is done. But being unable to follow a card merely because of inability to follow a swift movement, does not mean that the spectator is deceived. Actually he isn't deceived. He knows the deception is accomplished by the sleight. Didn't he see him "doing something with the cards?" So he is not deceived so much as he is confused or perplexed or bewildered.

Good deception requires absolute lack of any ideas as to how the trick is accomplished. If a trick is accomplished through a visible sleight, an undisguised movement, which is seen by the spectator and which is interpreted by the spectator as nothing else but a sleight, that spectator has an idea as to how the trick is made possible. The spectator now has a satisfying physical reason for knowing that the performer has not accomplished the impossible. That is as far as many spectators care to go. And it is sufficient to destroy deception entirely.

What has been said about the fast uncovered pass applies to the pass which is made out in the open, without distracting the spectator's attention, without an attempt at extreme speed.

On the other hand, where the pass has been disguised as some other *normal* action—even though it may be only the magician apparently riffling the cards—deception is maintained. This is because the pass is not seen as *such*. At the end of the trick the spectator has no clue as to how the apparently impossible was accomplished.

Where the spectator s attention is drawn away from the hands, during the operation of the pass, the sleight is not seen at all. Because it is not seen it cannot possibly contribute to the spectator's enlightenment. But this is a feature, of course, somewhat removed from the influence of the performer's action upon deception. Here the deception is accomplished through another principle that will be discussed later in this work.

There is an old trick that Thayer's older catalogs listed as *Mysto*. Recently it has been revived under a variety of names. However, substantially, the effect is that a large die is placed in a frame that encircles four of the six sides. A hole has been drilled through the die. This hole coincides with similar holes on each side of the frame. The magician threads a ribbon through one side of the frame, thence through the die and finally out through the opposite side of the frame. Apparently the die cannot be

removed from the frame without carrying the ribbon with it. The final effect is that the magician does remove the die, seemingly pulling it right through the ribbon which remains stretched across the opening in the frame.

This trick is made possible by a thread that is looped around the hole on one side of the frame. From here the thread is carried up the inside edge of the frame, across the top and then down the opposite side to, and through, the hole, *Walking Through a Ribbon* is accomplished in a similar manner. As the ribbon is being threaded through the frame—apparently being pushed through the hole in the die—a short end emerges on the opposite side. Under the guise of pulling this short end, the magician actually grasps the thread only. When he pulls this thread, the loop tightens on the ribbon and drags it around the die, up one side across the top and down the other. Thus the die is freed from the ribbon, although the latter still appears to be threaded through the block.

The performer's actions are important here. Still assuming that the performer's norm is economical motion, a quick wide sweep of the hand and arm, in the act of pulling the thread and rib bon around the die, would be in contrast with the performer's riormal action. No such broad or extravagant gesture would accompany his mere act of pulling the ribbon through a bit further. Since what we are trying to accomplish is deception, and since diverting special attention away from necessary operations in accomplishing the trick helps deception, the skillful magician would, and should, *try to make this special motion resemble the ordinary thing the spectator believes he is doing*. If the action doesn't look like the ordinary action, to the spectator it is not an ordinary happening. This attracts his attention.

As a matter of fact, these broad fast moves are not normal. Too often they are seen because the performer is not sufficiently skilled in the fundamentals of deception. As I've said before, these unexplained irregular happenings do not deceive. They merely confuse.

Eugene Laurant did an extremely effective production of a large rabbit. He produced this rabbit from a large mass of paper tape he had just spun from a hat. Actually the rabbit was behind a chair. A broad, sweeping gesture was necessary to reach the load. Mr. Laurant's normal gestures were graceful, economical, and restrained. Getting the rabbit from behind the chair, without the spectators noticing the extravagant motion necessary, was impossible. Such a gesture would not have deceived anyone.

But Mr. Laurant anticipated the necessity of the move. As he unreeled the vari-colored paper tape from the hat, spinning it upon his wand, his arm swept around faster and faster in wider and wider circles. Such broad sweeps were necessary, apparently, in spinning the tape from the hat. During one of these swings Mr. Laurant swept up the rabbit behind the mass of paper. Then he pulled the paper apart to reveal his new production. It was one of the most skillful loads I've ever seen. It was completely deceptive.

This is an excellent example of how preparation may be made to accomplish a move that would normally fail to deceive.

Card men come up against similar handling problems.

The matter of making the hand, containing a palmed card, look natural is a formidable problem in itself. First of all, it must be clearly understood that no normal person holds an empty hand stiffly with the fingers tightly clamped together. An empty hand is relaxed and the fingers look loosely separated.

If the hand does not look empty—and relaxation and looseness are prerequisites—if the hand is supposed to be empty, it will attract vigilant attention. What does one do? Well, the most skillful card men actually can hold a palmed card and keep the hand relaxed so that it appears empty. This is not always possible under all circumstances.

The next best thing to do—or, perhaps, even the best thing to do—is to divert attention from the hand containing the card. This was Max Malini's specialty. His hands were much too small to cover normal size cards adequately. So he depended entirely upon keeping the spectator's attention away from his hands. During the years I saw Malini perform frequently, many times the palmed cards were clearly visible to me—sometimes they even protruded from beyond his hand. But he kept the spectator's attention upon what he was saying. They paid no attention to his hands because the hands did not seem to be doing anything. Often he would locate a card and, without worry or concern or anxiety of any kind, he would hold the break, talking or joking with the spectators, until it suited his purpose to make the side steal. Then, when he did it, it would be diabolically disguised as something else. Perhaps he would just seem to be straightening the pack preliminary to having another card selected.

No one ever caught Malini in a sleight because he *never* made a move that would attract attention to his hands. He never seemed to be doing anything with his hands that was the least bit suspicious. He was truly a master because he made his necessary moves seem to be normal, natural movements—actions that seemed to have nothing to do with the trick in question. He was deliberate, calculating, disarming and as cunning as the proverbial fox.

These actions of the performer must be carefully planned in connection with his handling of his properties. An empty hat, an empty glass and anything else empty is handled as if it is *empty*, not full of something. It must not seem to have abnormal weight. It must not be handled with anxiety, as if something might spill. It must not be kept *calculatingly* turned from the spectator's scrutiny.

Anything that is empty does not weigh more than its normal empty weight. It does not seem to be full of something. It s not handled with anxiety. Nothing can spill from it. There is no reason to the keep the spectators from looking into it.

A simple cylinder is not handled gingerly, unless something is concealed therein, something which the performer desires to keep from the spectator's knowledge. The gingerly handled property is the property that gets the spectators immediate and complete attention. Remember, the spectator expects some chicanery from the performer. He is on the lookout for it. It does not suit the purpose of deception to verify the spectator expectations in this regard.

The performer should be particularly careful that his handling of all of his properties, *in every respect*, is in keeping with what they are purported to be, *at all times*. If they are handled as if they are what they seem to be, this contributes to convincingness and conviction. It diverts undue and sometimes disastrous attention. Naturalness is the most powerful weapon at the disposal of the magician when he seeks to deceive. Naturalness is an anesthetic to attention.

If natural handling is impossible, the substitutes are to divert attention away from the property when an unnatural or revealing movement must be made with it, or to disguise the movement as something else.

MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

CHAPTER NINE

What the performer says is vital to the quality of deception. His speech is as important as his appearance.

In the last chapter stress was placed upon the necessity of conforming to an established *norm* in what is presented to the eye. A similar *norm* is established by the performer's manner of speaking. This may be created by the character he plays, or by his natural manner of speaking.

Thus the spectator becomes accustomed to a certain pattern in the performer's speech. He is aware of a certain rate of delivery, of a style of enunciation, of a tempo and cadence. He is conscious of a certain accent, of a specific articulation, of pitch and a variation of this pitch, of tonal quality and of other identifications. This becomes the normal, the usual, the typical speech. It is familiar and regular. There is nothing in it to attract special attention because it conforms to a pattern.

Now suppose, through tension and uncertainty, as the performer approaches a critical phase in the operation of the trick, that some nervous mannerism manifests itself. This might be a rise in pitch, or a noticeable tension that might be revealed in one or several ways. The magician may articulate more precisely. His delivery may be more deliberate. A tendency to hesitate and stammer is possible. He might even slur the syllables together, or he might omit whole phrases. There are so many ways in which such tension may manifest itself that it would be impossible to enumerate all of them. Yet the manifestation could be exactly the opposite to that which would affect another performer.

It does not take the spectator very long to realize that these variations from the norm "telegraph" the approach of some crisis for the

magician. It is an indirect way for the performer almost to say to the spectator, "I am now approaching a critical phase in the accomplishment of this trick. If you are alert and observing, you may

catch me.

An audible pronouncement to this effect, it is hardly necessary to say, would be disastrous to the magician. It obviously is not advisable to suggest the idea, even most indirectly. It would be a definite hazard to the deception.

But, like the performer who, as Dorny suggests, is "pull shy"—because he draws away at the impact of the handkerchief pull—or like the card man who winces or blinks as he does the pass or executes a top or bottom change or similar sleight, magicians may acquire bad vocal habits. Some of them cough or grunt, exhale or inhale, clear their throats or make other audible noises at a critical moment, or during the execution of a move. Such bad habits should be eliminated, eliminated not because of their effect upon the showmanship involved, but eliminated because of their detrimental effect upon the deception. These become prominent clues to the spectator.

Should there be something connected with the mechanism of the trick which is noisy, or should some phase of the operation result in betraying sounds, an attempt by the performer to cover this by talking louder would not be deceptive. It would fail to deceive because the spectator would instantly realize that the magician had an ulterior purpose in this. It would fail *unless the performer could contrive some apparent alternative reason for raising his voice.* This should be a reason which the spectator would recognize and would find natural. Sometimes such difficulties may be overcome by timing the words in such a manner that they coincide with, and mask, the unwonted sound.

Sometimes one may witness a performer who slows down his speaking cadence to conform to a series of secret moves which he is executing. Because it may supply a possible clue, aside from the bad showmanship involved, this and similar habits must be avoided.

Everything a person says in connection with the execution of a trick, every audible vocal sound, must conform to the norm.

What this magician says, in addition to *how* he says it, is also important. Aside from the sounds made, the performer establishes another norm. This is in a vocabulary, a sentence structure and an idiom he habitually uses. Again the norm must be maintained because variations attract special interest.

The third norm in connection with the magician's speech is the subject matter which is normally usual, generally, to the situation, or subject matter which would seem usual to the particular circumstances. Reference has been made before in this work to the ill-advised use of the word *ordinary* in reference to any property the performer may be using. The word is an obvious danger flag to the spectator.

If the performer's hands are obviously empty, and are so actually, there is no purpose in calling attention to the fact that they are ' 'absolutely empty" by saying so. The spectator can see this. But if the hands are apparently empty, but not so actually, the direct statement will arouse special attention. And

such a declaration, in connection with hands that can not be shown empty, simply concentrates attention upon the omission.

This is not true only of hands. It holds true of all properties. If you have a hat, a box, a tube or any other kind of container, its emptiness is not increased by saying so, as well as showing it. If the particular container appears to be empty, even though a secret compartment, a mirror or something else actually contains or hides a load, undue emphasis upon the emptiness merely concentrates attention upon that phase. There is no need to create additional suspicion. Where the container cannot be shown empty convincingly, a statement regarding the emptiness will merely remind the spectator that if its emptiness is that important, it should be shown empty.

Implication is always stronger than a direct statement. This is true because implication seems to the spectator to be a voluntary decision on his part, uninfluenced by the magician. It is also stronger because such conclusions, reached in this manner, do not seem to be of particular importance to the performer. If the magician can so contrive matters that the spectator seems to reach his own conclusions uninfluenced, he is far better situated that if he seems to be vitally concerned. If the magician is vitally concerned, if it seems of definite importance to the magician, the spectator will usually instinctively resist and rebel. He will oppose himself to the magician, in which event considerable convincing is required on the part of the magician.

This is probably the principle reason why indirect methods, of all kinds, are usually more effective in skillful deception.

Let us assume for a moment that you are a possible client for an investment house. Two companies seek your patronage. One of them is housed in a decrepit, shabby office. The salesmen for this company are fast talkers. They seem anxious to sign you up. They continually harp upon what a sound investment you are making, what a golden opportunity this is for you and how much profit you will make.

On the other hand, the second company is housed in quietly dignified, expensive and well-maintained quarters. Here the salesmen are poised. They speak quietly and do not seem at all eager to consummate the transaction. They are conservative in their statements and make no extravagant promises.

Suppose they were both absolutely reliable firms. Which would get your business?

Suppose they were both organizations of confidence men, which fact is unknown to you, of course. Which would get your business?

It is a safe assumption that, in both cases, the investment would be made with the second company.

In the first case, direct methods were used exclusively, except for the visual appeal which was indirect. In the second case, the methods were entirely indirect. You reached your conclusions by implication.

Let us apply this to magic. The first magician holds up a tube. He seems to place no undue stress upon it. He simply holds it up so that you may see that it is empty. At another performance another magician holds up a tube. He shows it empty, saying, "This is an absolutely empty tube. I'll even prove it's empty. I'll shove a wand through from this end to this end, and then I'll shove it back in the opposite direction... And so on blah, blah, blah!

If it really is an empty tube, just a simple cylinder, which magician do you believe? If the tube were actually *The Phantom Tube,* which magician would lead you to suspect it?

This seems to demonstrate clearly how powerful indirect methods actually are.

His manner of speaking and his choice of words easily betray the performer's attitude. Preoccupation, tension, uncertainty and other misgivings or worries on the part of the magician are subconsciously revealed through inadvertent words or by subtle overtones. Sensing the presence of these, the spectator—often subconsciously—anticipates a crisis in the deception. This heightens his alertness.

On the other hand, if the magician has thoroughly trained himself to maintain the same norm throughout his presentation, there is no betraying prominence, a detrimental accentuation, when critical portions of the trick are at hand. Without this warning to the spectator, the latter fails to receive a clue that might assist him in circumventing the magician's attempts at deception.

The spectator is under no illusions about this matter. In decades past, it may have been true that spectators attributed the magician's power to some supernatural or mysterious source. But people are not so gullible now. Maskelyne and Devant recognized this early in the century. In *OUR MAGIC,* this is their definition: *Magic consists in creating, by misdirection of the senses, the mental impressions of a supernatural agency at work.* A *mental* impression, of course, is something that exists in the mind as a representation, an idea induced by some external stimulus. Since a representation is a likeness or a reproduction of the real thing, it is not the thing itself but the mere portrayal of that thing.

So since the magician is merely creating an impression of real magic, it is merely imitation magic. This is definitely realized by the performer, obviously. Not so obviously, but still entirely true, the spectators know this to be imitation magic also. Admittedly, there may be an occasional spectator in any audience who may believe himself to be witnessing real miracles. But there are few of these.

Since the spectator is aware that he is witnessing imitation magic accomplished by natural means, he realizes that the deception rests entirely upon clever concealment of the method. Unless some stronger interest intervenes, thus diverting his attention upon method, his entire mental concentration is

upon ferreting out the secret. This is another reason why principles of entertainment and showmanship should particularly attract magicians. They divert the spectator's attention from the secret of the trick.

Here is an opportunity for the performer's voice to assist in the deception. Often what the performer says, and his method of saying it, will divert attention from the secret of the trick by substituting a newer, more interesting subject for the spectator's consideration. This is not done obviously, of course. It is done in such a way that it seems to be accidental in the natural course of events.

This may be done through the sense of sight as well as through the sense of hearing. Some new interest, obtained through tbe eyes, often will divert attention from the method of the trick itself.

Let us see how this may done:

Suppose you were performing for an audience of women. Suppose, right at the crucial moment, you should say, "Oh, by the way, that reminds me to tell you of the hats women are going to be wearing next season…" And from there you go on about hats, or frocks, or something else of interest to women, distracting their attention for the moment, from what you are doing.

Men are usually susceptible to attractive women. A remark in connection with a good-looking blonde, or a red-head or a brunette, will hold their interest momentarily.

And in connection with the sense of sight, pictures of the same subjects, or even models, will attract their visual attention.

Of course, these are not the only subjects that may divert such attention. There are many subjects. These depend upon the audiences and their station in life, sex, objectives, education, and many other diversified factors. In cases such as this, it will be necessary for the magician to select diversionary subjects which will catch the attention and interest of the cross-section of the particular kind of audience he entertains.

Further in this work more explicit discussion in this connection will appear.

Consider this chap:

He borrows a handkerchief, reaching for it with an outstretched left hand, as he guardedly draws back his right hand, a right hand held stiffly, fingers separated claw-like, thumb stiffly protruding from the palm. ' I want you to notice that my hand is absolutely empty," he says. As he draws the handkerchief over his fisted left hand, he explains, "I place the handkerchief over my fist and poke a hole in the top with my thumb." The stiff thumb is rammed at the cloth that is pushed down into the opening at the top of the fist.

As soon as approximately half the thumb is hidden in the fist, the left hand makes a twisting motion as if the performer were removing a recalcitrant cork from a bottle, while the right thumb tugs itself free. A lighted cigarette is borrowed, without particular significance in any of the performer's remarks. Then he drops the cigarette into the stiffly held, handkerchief-encased left fist. "I drop the burning cigarette into the handkerchief, and push it in with the thumb."

The thumb is rammed into the hole, on top of the cigarette. But it comes right out again in a heluva rush, with a gasp of pain from the magician. The scorched thumb goes into the performer's mouth with alacrity. When it is finally pulled forth, it is liberally coated with saliva. The magician's face still shows traces of pain.

Then, obviously shaken and more obviously disconcerted and confused, he rattles along, grasping for whatever words he can find. Finally, he gingerly shoves the thumb into the smoking fist-pocket, saying again, "I push the cigarette into the handkerchief, with my thumb#&131;" Several wary pokes into the handkerchief.

Finally the thumb is shoved inside purposefully. Then it is withdrawn, again held stiffly away from the palm, the fingers spread wide apart. Momentarily this paralysis is held as a pose. Then the right pulls the handkerchief away from the left and the center of the handkerchief is shown to be unharmed. The right relaxes its hold upon the handkerchief and goes back to the protruding-thumb-claw-hand pose. The left holds the handkerchief aloft triumphantly. Finally the handkerchief is returned with the extended left arm and with the reluctant and bashful right withdrawn. As the spectator takes his handkerchief, the performer's right hand is seen to drop something into his right coat pocket.

If you think this is an exaggeration, there are still some magicians you should see.

However, fortunately, the average magician is not like this. The illustration very broadly shows the points discussed in this and the last chapters, in connection with the performer's actions and words. Obviously, it is very bad showmanship. But it is worse deception. There is no need to point out, I am sure, just where the performer was wrong and how he could have preserved the deceptive feature, even with the totally unnecessary and moronic accident.

Nothing the performer says should suggest, directly or indirectly, a clue as to method. If there is a tip on the thumb, the thumb itself should not be mentioned. Special attention should not be drawn to it. If you are doing a rope trick, it is not advisable to mention secret loops, cement, fasteners, substitutions or any other of the numerous contrivances magicians have and do apply to this trick. If you are doing a box escape, do not call attention to secret panels. If you are doing rope ties, do not mention secret slack and the like.

It must be borne in mind that any solution to the mystery, even if it is not the correct one, will satisfy the spectator. It is bad psychology to suggest solutions. If you could actually perform the miracle you are imitating, if you could actually do that which you pretend to do—and which the spectator knows

you are pretending to do—you would not bring up these suggestions. You would not bring them up because you would take it for granted that the spectator would appreciate real magic when he saw it. So your imitation of magic ceases to be a good imitation when it begins losing its resemblance to real magic.

I saw quite well aware that prominent professional magicians have occasionally broken this requirement. Eugene Laurant's ring routine, clever as he was and excellent as the routine is, has an example. If you will recall, Mr. Laurant held up a key ring early in the routine, showing the break and demonstrating its different sound. Then he openly discarded this key and proceeded to do the trick with another key ring.

But all performers cannot get away with this sort of thing. It requires superlative audacity and great skill. I continue to believe it to be bad psychology. It does suggest a method. It is actually the basis of the method. Such a suggestion is a stimulus to an idea. That cannot be denied. Who is to say how, or from what direction, a response is to come?

It is fundamental, I believe, that the performer realizes the spectator viewpoint. This spectator finds those things important which seem important to the magician. Things may be made to seem important to the performer both directly and indirectly. This importance is perceived through the senses. It proceeds from what the performer shows and says. Significant revelations may be made consciously or subconsciously. They may be intentional or accidental.

It is necessary that the magician insure that his interpretation, of everything he does, is the interpretation that the spectator gets. If he doesn't insure this, someone is going to be fooled—and it won't be the spectator.

MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

CHAPTER TEN

Among the things, which contribute to the spectator's perceptions, are the magician's properties. These include his tables, his apparatus and the other auxiliary adjuncts and requisites with which he performs.

It is a corollary, I think, that when a person is confronted with a multiplicity of interests, he is inclined to give less intent attention to those things with which he is familiar. The very nature of the magician's performance requires vigilant attention on the part of a spectator. Usually there are so many diversified attractions, of varying degrees of familiarity, and usually the utmost alertness is necessary on his part; if he is to escape being deceived. The spectator does not know, of course, what to expect. As a result his attention must be spread over many things.

Since it is impossible to follow every detail vigilantly, the spectator must weed out as much as possible in the shortest possible time. So usually he passes over the familiar things with the least amount of attention.

Suppose the performer were to hold up two cylinders. One is obviously made by removing the top and bottom from a large tomato juice can. The other is a brightly gleaming chromium-plated tube. In the first case, because it seems obviously what the performer explains it to be, the attention is more an immediate acceptance than it is a careful scrutiny.

On the other hand, the brightly shining cylinder looks like someone had spent considerable time and trouble on it. To the spectator it is unfamiliar. He has never had such a device in his hands. He does not know what it is for. There is nothing about it to call for casual assumptions on his part. So for these reasons—and for others—the ornate device gets his complete and vigilant attention.

Suppose, now, that the tomato can tube contains an inner lining similar to that used in *The*

Phantom Tube. Let us assume, also, that the plated cylinder has no special secret preparation. It is almost certain that the spectator would fail to concentrate his attention upon the vital device. If so, the deception would be successful, *providing the magician did not attract attention to the tomato can tube unnecessarily*.

The properties themselves have performed important functions in the deception. The commonplace character of the tomato can tube diverts attention from it. The special preparation evident, and the strangeness to the spectator, attracts attention to the plated cylinder. Even the everyday appearance of one, contrasted with the brilliant attraction of the other, definitely controls the spectator's interest.

As far as the properties are concerned, the deception is strong. But the performer handles these tubes. What the performer says and does can nullify all of the headway toward successful deception established by the properties. He can unduly stress the emptiness of the tomato can tube. He can point suspicion to it by insisting verbally that it is empty "and unprepared." He can make it seem important to the performer. If a device is important to the person who is attempting to deceive him, the spectator will find it important to himself as well.

Now let us reverse the case. Suppose there is no special preparation in the tube made from the can. Suppose, on the other hand, the plated tube actually is a *Phantom Tube*. Certainly it must be obvious by now that the performer is concentrating the spectator's scrutiny and attention upon the very nucleus of the deception. With a less clever device, the mode of deception might be revealed. Even with *The Phantom Tube* the deception is placed in jeopardy unnecessarily.

Let us go to The Master for an example. We examine *The Growth of Flower's* as performed by Harry Kellar. Kellar was before my time, so I must rely upon the description of someone else. Probably the most authentic account of Kellar's exact routine is that of Dr. James W. Elliott as it is outlined in *ELLIOTT'S LAST LEGACY*.

There is some difference of opinion as to the exact apparatus and method of working that Kellar used. Fundamentally, the trick depended upon two deeply draped stands. Attached to the center standards of these stands were shelves—one on each stand—that were hidden by the drapes that were open in the back. A load stood upon each shelf.

The effect was that the magician showed two flowerpots, each of which contained a quantity of sand. Upon placing some seed in the first pot, and upon covering the upper part of the pot with a large cone that was open on each end, a small plant was seen to have sprouted. Going to the other pot and lowering the cone over it, Kellar produced a large rose bush in full bloom. Crossing to the opposite side of the stage, he lowered the cone over the sprout once more, whereupon it, too, became a large blooming bush.

Kellar's loads, of course, came from the shelves on the deeply draped stands. While I did not see

Kellar do this trick, as I have mentioned before, I did see *The Kellar Flower Growth* performed by another magician. I examined his apparatus thoroughly. In this method the empty cone was exchanged for a loaded one in each case. Hopkins' *MAGIC*, obviously referring to Kellar but not mentioning his name, states that the cones nested. The first empty one was placed right over the second one in getting the first load. After this load was released, both cones were placed over the third one and all three were brought up as one.

Because I saw the first method used and because another apparatus which later I examined was claimed to have been Kellar's, I am inclined to think that the method first explained, wherein the cones were exchanged, was the method Kellar used. If the second equipment was authentic, the nesting method would have been impossible because the cones would not nest. Also, all cones were highly plated which would have been unnecessary and even disadvantageous if the nesting principle were used.

But let us get on with our discussion of apparatus.

The apparatus in question presents several difficulties in making the deception successful. In the first place, the stands with the abnormally deep drapes were highly suspicious. Secondly, the necessity of obtaining these loads, whether by exchanging or nesting, *without adroit psychological deception*, would seem to make deception almost impossible.

Here is the way Kellar overcame these difficulties and made it one of his most memorable features:

He entered from stage left, carrying the cone, and walked to the footlights where he showed the cone empty. The two deeply draped stands were up toward the back of the stage. Nearer the footlights, one on each side of the stage, were two light undraped stands.

After showing the cone empty, he walked to the draped table on the left and showed the flower pot which was resting there. Taking some "seed" from his vest pocket, he planted these in the pot and covered it with the empty cone. Almost immediately he withdrew the cone and showed the sprout. This sprout had been taken from his pocket with the seed.

And as he tipped the pot forward to show the sprout, Kellar lowered the cone carelessly and unobtrusively behind the drape. Here he stole the load.

But he grasped the pot in his left hand, walking around the back of this table, and carried it forward to the undraped stand at the left of the stage. He left the pot, with its sprout, en this stand.

Then he went to the draped stand on the right and exhibited the pot there. He covered it momentarily and released the first load to reveal the colorful bush. Immediately he lowered the cone behind the drape, walking around behind this table, and made his second load.

From the right of the table he crossed downstage to the undraped stand at the left, upon which was left the pot with the sprout. He covered the sprout, released the load and revealed the second bush. Then he walked upstage to the bush on the right draped table, picked it up and carried it downstage to the undraped stand on the right.

Careful study of Kellar's tactics reveals why he was a great magician. He realized that the deep drapes were dangerous if employed directly. So he diverted suspicion from them by making it appear that if the deep drape had a purpose, its purpose was not connected with the cone. The bush started to sprout before be came near the drape with the cone.

Then while curiosity and a desire to witness the trick brought the attention to the pot, he acquired the first load. To eliminate any suspicion that the load was coming from the table, he carried the pot to the undraped stand. Presumably he was going to continue the trick there. But, instead, apparently still with the empty cone, he crossed to the other pot and produced the bush. The second load, like the first, was made when all attention was upon the subject of the production.

Immediately he went to the undraped stand, which made it seem that the deep drapes had no significance, and produced the second full-grown bush.

Carrying the first bush to the right stand afterward was calculated to leave the impression that it, too, had been produced upon an undraped stand. There were so many moves and so much detail, coupled with Kellar's superb diversion of suspicion from the deep drapes, which it was virtually impossible for the spectator to go back and reconstruct just what had happened. This was, indeed, deception at its best.

Note how Kellar covered the weak spots in the trick.

This deception was made possible, as a successful deception, almost entirely through skillfully applied psychology.

He knew that once the cone was shown empty it would hold close and unwavering attention. Under these conditions it would have been disastrous to attempt to make the load behind the deep draped table. So he had to arrange matters to give the appearance that the production was made without taking the cone from the spectator's sight. He also had to arrange some strong attraction to divert attention from the cone during the vital first load.

The spectators, of course, had no idea as to exactly what was to happen. The production of the small sprout, from beneath the large cone, was a surprise. This sprout was so small that it required complete momentary concentration on the part of the spectator to *see* it at all. After this minute production, attention on the cone relaxed.

Kellar so timed the tipping of the pot that the load was made at the exact time the pot was tipped

forward. If the spectators were not to miss part of the trick—or all of it, as far as they knew they were compelled to look at the pot instead of watching the hand making the load, Well, they paid their admission to see Kellar's show. It is reasonable to assume that they would try to see the sprouting plant.

Probably Kellar's move—the picking up and tilting of the flowerpot, the loading of the cone and his walk around the table was made as a single, natural maneuver, rather than as a series of connected moves. Probably by the time the spectators could get a good look at the flower pot, Kellar had walked around back of the table, picking up the pot as he did so, and was bringing it forward so that the spectators could see it better.

Then, when he went over to the other pot, the audience was probably expecting the production of a similar sprout. Consequently when the colorful bush in full bloom was revealed, it not only came as a surprise but it held attention. Undoubtedly, at this psychological moment, Kellar again naturally and quietly made his second load.

But the second bush actually was produced upon an undraped table. And, as I mentioned before, the bringing forward of the first bush was undoubtedly planned to leave the impression that the first bush, too, had made its appearance on the small side stand. Also, the entire action was subtly diverted away from the tables with the deep drape, diverted and finally actually carried away from them. Then, as he started cutting off the flowers and distributing them, probably a curtain closed upon the vital stands with the deep drapes.

So it is possible, if you approach these problems intelligently, to accomplish deception successfully, even where the apparatus itself would, at first thought, be a handicap.

Many pieces of apparatus used by magicians are designed to mislead the spectator's impressions and perceptions. Among these are bottomless glasses, double-backed cards, shell balls, nesting shell bottles, mirrors hiding secret compartments and practically all of the others. The clockworks pack which causes the card to seem to rise unaided from the pack, like the simpler but just as effective threaded pack, is simply a device to influence the spectator's perception. So is the Kellar, or Maskelyne if you prefer, levitation. Or the devices for giving the impression of sawing a woman in half. Or egg bags. Or production boxes, vanishing bird cages, bowl producing tables, double handkerchiefs, ring reels, linking ring sets, fire bowls, fishing rods, or practically all other magical apparatus.

Fundamentally, these devices are intended only to influence the spectator's mind through his perceptive senses.

If the device is cleverly contrived, with the secret mechanism—whether the mechanics are simple or complex—difficult to fathom, often considerable of the weight of the deception may be carried by the apparatus. Yet some psychological deception must be practiced. If the device is awkward, if it in itself is not difficult to fathom, much of the success of the deception may depend upon the adroit application of clever psychological principles.,

Some pieces of apparatus, probably most of the apparatus magicians use, are tricky looking. Spectators are certain to regard them with utmost suspicion. Why not? The device looks just like what it most obviously is something with which to do tricks. All spectators must necessarily suspect it. Many spectators, knowing that it is a special device for accomplishing a trick, will accept the solution as proceeding from the device. These people do not admit they are deceived. In fact, as far as they are concerned, they are not.

They accept the solution as being made possible by the device. Exactly how the device may accomplish the deception—I mean the exact details—does not interest them. It interests them no more than the exact details of any other mechanism. They are not deceived by the radio, even though they may not understand its workings technically. They know that the arrangement of wire, tubes and condensers, once the radio is turned on and tuned, will bring in the program. Since the radio, as a complete device, caused the phenomenon to be evidenced, the mere pointing to the radio and saying. "That's what does it," satisfies them—completely. It is like showing some special tool, devised for some specific purpose, like showing the tool together with a sample of its work and saying. "Look. Isn't this remarkable? It's done with this tool."

Only the magician, generally, is interested in specific details. Does not the explanation of *The Vanishing Bird Cage* satisfy the usual person when he learns that the cage folds and goes up the sleeve? Yet there are many vital details left unexplained. and the mere possession of a cage which would fold, plus an empty sleeve, certainly would not equip a person to do the trick.

To establish firmly this fact that a mere general indication is completely satisfactory. I should like to cite the various exposures that have appeared in print. The Camel cigarette advertisements, as you will recall, were little more than highly generalized explanations.

I recall vividly that I was taking a 16 mm. motion picture of Thurston performing *The Levitation of the Princess Karnac,* during a regular performance some years ago. I had arranged this through John Hilliard. We had selected the balcony as the best location from which to take the picture, since it would include the actual theater atmosphere such as the proscenium arch and the orchestra. As any of you who possess such cameras will agree, the camera sets up quite a buzzing noise during operation. So while Thurston was apparently causing the girl to float, the effect being accomplished by what is probably the most elaborate magical mechanism, several spectators heard the camera operating. They immediately connected the camera with the levitation. I could see them nudge their companions, call their attention to the camera, then point to the activity on the stage. From the way they relaxed and settled back in their seats, I am positive they felt they had solved the mystery.

This argument, of course, holds true in varying degrees with various people. Some are content with a generalized idea—probably most, if the methods of editors of popular publications are any criterion. Others require more detailed information before their curiosity is satisfied. But few, I am certain, from among the laymen would be willing to admit that they have been deceived, if a device is recognized as the means of accomplishing the result. Deception disappears, from the spectators

viewpoint, as soon as they become aware as to how the effect is accomplished, whether by a move, a mechanism or through other means. To them, a mere clue eliminates the deception. Actually, they are not deceived any longer. They are only ignorant as to how the mechanism works specifically.

All of this establishes an important point. No frankly magical device is nearly as deceptive as a device that looks like some ordinary thing familiar to the spectator. This is because, since the device is a special contrivance, it must be suspected. The spectators are unfamiliar with it, regardless of how thoroughly the magician may show it.

Since the spectators are unfamiliar with it, it is suspected, whether or not, in truth, it actually does accomplish the effect.

On the other hand, where an apparently familiar object is used for something that seems impossible, the deception is greater. This is because the spectator looks upon the object, as *he* knows it, not necessarily as the magician may have prepared it. Since it is an object with which he is familiar, psychologically the spectator will accept it as being like what it has been in his past experience. A bottomless glass is a good example. If this glass is handled as the *usual* glass is handled, referred to as the usual glass is referred to, there will be no reason for the spectator to construe it as anything but the tumbler with which he is familiar. Naturally, he is quite well aware that it has a bottom. Such a device, manufactured for containing something, just does not exist without a bottom. Except for those special devices magicians use, there is no such thing as a bottomless tumbler.

The magicians' usual apparatus is designed to give a false idea of emptiness, of solidity, of isolation, of absence of mechanism or other qualities necessary in connection with some effect. It is usually designed to accomplish some purpose such as an appearance, a vanish, an exchange or a transformation, motive power, identification, penetration, restoration or other effects as detailed in *THE TRICK BRAIN*.

If it is necessary that such apparatus have a special appearance, the natural suspicion attendant is, of course, unavoidable. It follows, then, that the apparatus must be capable of withstanding severe scrutiny without destroying the deception. If the specific apparatus cannot maintain the deception under these circumstances, it will be necessary to divert attention from it. The alternative to this is to contrive matters so that the deception seems to the spectator to be accomplished by or through something else, in some manner.

As far as deception is concerned, there seems to be no valid reason for deliberately forcing the apparatus to appear to be tricky. Neither is there any valid reason for substituting something that has a tricky appearance where an ordinary appearing object may be used.

Very definitely, I feel certain, suspicion may be diverted and scrutiny may be materially reduced if it is possible to make a piece of magician's apparatus appear to be something ordinary, something with which the spectator is somewhat familiar. Any deception is stronger when it is accomplished with

something with which the spectator is acquainted—something with which the spectator has reason to believe the deception is impossible.

Tell me, do you believe it is possible to walk through a brick wall? Do you think it is possible to walk through a wall made of specially built and obviously specially painted panels? Which would seem the more difficult to accomplish?

MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

CHAPTER ELEVEN

As one delves more and more deeply into the fundamental happenings during the process of deception with magic, it becomes evident that two designs are taking shape. Repeatedly, what the magician does is made possible through two general methods of attack upon the spectator's mind.

As has been emphasized here again and again, the spectator's mind is reached through his perceptions. The first general method, used constantly, but intermixed with the true, is that a *great portion of what the spectator perceives is disguised in some manner*. This holds true of both what the magician uses in the way of properties and what he does. Many of the things that the spectator sees, hears, feels, and otherwise receives through his perceptive senses come to him in a false light. He is not actually seeing what he believes he is seeing. The same may be said of the other senses.

Things that cannot be seen in their true light, without destroying the deception, are disguised in such a manner that the deception is maintained.

Where it is impossible to allow something to be perceived in its true light, and where disguise is impossible or inadvisable, the second essential method of deception is employed. This is *in controlling the spectator's attention*. In other words, where scrutiny is damaging, scrutiny is diverted in some manner.

The Changing Bag will illustrate this. Suppose the bag were to be used for the exchange of a quantity of questions. The performer desires to obtain the spectators' questions for offstage reading by his assistant. At the same time, he wishes to give the impression to his audience that the questions have been untouched.

The device itself is disguised as a bag mounted on a frame. Actually, of course, it is not a simple bag at all. It is a double bag, built in such a way that the interior of one bag simulates the interior of the other, In this case, the duplicate bag simulates the interior of the *bag* into *which the original* questions were dropped.

After the questions have been dropped into the bag, the handle is turned and the second lining takes the place of the original one. Simultaneously, a duplicate set of papers, representing the original set, occupies the bag, disguised as the original set. When these are dumped out in a glass container, or upon a tray, they are disguised as the original questions.

The usual changing bag is not an object with which the usual spectator is familiar. It is unlike anything within his regular, everyday experience. Therefore, the spectator cannot accept this device by as being just a simple bag. The performer,

consequently, reduces the attention upon it to a minimum by making it seem of no particular importance. He uses the device without undue emphasis upon it, and when he has dumped out the duplicate questions, he puts it aside negligently. *If it does not seem important to the magician, it will not seem important in connection with the deception.* Also, in this particular case, at this stage of the proceedings, *no deception has taken place*, as far as the spectator is concerned. The use of the device seems preliminary to the actual trick. So, since it is an accessory used prior to the presentation of the deception, in the spectator's eyes, the performer can get away with minimizing it. Thus, he can divert attention from it.

Suppose, however, *The Changing Bag* is used to change the color of a handkerchief, apparently, or to cause a cut rope to become whole. Here the deception takes place in connection with the bag, directly. Since the bag is not a familiar thing to him, the spectator's suspicion will immediately center upon it. Why not? The change seems to take place within the bag. What is to stop this spectator from thinking that some kind of an exchanging device is incorporated therein? Try as he might, the performer can not minimize the importance of the bag as he did with the billet exchange. This is because *The Changing Bag* openly took an important part in the deception. In the former case, the magician contrived matters so that the use of the bag seemed secondary.

Now, however, it is right up in *front* of the spectator for suspicion. If it is left that way, the deception is extremely weak. The spectator knows the deception is due to some mechanical arrangement within the bag.

To avoid this, the performer might disguise *The Changing Bag* as something with which the spectator is familiar. Thayer did this when he designed a similar device for use with *The Mutilated Parasol Trick*. He disguised the bag as a ladies handbag. And in this disguise he immediately diverted much suspicion from it because many spectators viewed it in terms of handbags with which they were familiar.

There is still another way of overcoming the difficulty. That is by diverting attention away from the bag before the spectators have an opportunity to consider the part it plays. Whipping out a six-shooter and pumping lead into a nearby spectator would distract attention from the bag. But it would not benefit the deception. In fact, the deception would be ruined because it would be completely forgotten. So a bit of judgment is necessary in selecting the method of diverting the attention.

An attractive feminine assistant, perhaps scantily dressed, undoubtedly would compel a diversion of the attention, if she were to make an appearance at this time. Attention would swing with sufficient time interval allowed to permit the magician to exchange *The Changing Bag* for a similar—appearing device not equipped to make the necessary exchange. Then, of course, if time and lift mean nothing to the presentation, the spectators' suspicions may be completely dispelled by allowing them to examine the substitute thoroughly, even to the extent of chopping it up in little pieces. The attention would swing, certainly. but it would not swing satisfactorily if the girl came on crying, "Now look at me…" or with an expression to that effect. The diversion must not be obvious.

There is still another way in which the attention may be swung from the bag. This is, as in the case of the attention diversion last suggested, the substitution of a new, and stronger, interest. Suppose *The Changing Bag* were used for changing a red handkerchief to a green one. After the change, the handkerchief now being green, the magician anticipates the spectators' suspicions in connection with the bag. Before the spectator has much opportunity to consider the part the bag plays, the magician says. "I suppose you think there is a red handkerchief still in the bag…" He turns the bag inside out, whereupon there is a shower of tiny red handkerchiefs. He asks, "Which one do you mean?"

Of course, he has had a double load in the secret compartment all of the time. The green handkerchief was on top, with the dozen or so small ones, safely contained together, beneath it.

Getting back to the use of *The Changing Bag* for the billet switch:

The fact that the changing device is disguised as a receptacle for collecting the billets has been mentioned. The duplicate billets are disguised as the original ones. Getting the original questions is disguised as removing a discarded accessory. Attention is diverted from the removal of the bag by the performer's actions with the duplicate billets, preparatory to reading them. Taking up the necessary time to allow the assistant to open and make notes of the questions is disguised as a lecture upon the possibility of mental telepathy. Bringing notes on the questions to the performer is disguised as bringing in a crystal, perhaps. Reading the

notes is disguised as gazing into the crystal. Even the questions themselves are disguised. The language of the writer of the questions is not used. It is changed about. The performer reveals that he has the substance of the spectator's question, but he reveals it in a halting, groping manner, as if the information comes to him through extreme difficulty.

Things are disguised. Actions are disguised. Reasons are disguised. Results are disguised. Objectives are disguised. Maneuvers are disguised. Everywhere you look in connection with deception—be it performer, apparatus, movements or what not—one encounters disguise in some form.

And when the disguise is inadvisable or impossible, the spectator's attention is anticipated, dulled, dissipated, distracted or diverted from revealing details.

There are, of course, two kinds of disguise in connection with the physical properties employed by the magician. One disguise is strictly physical and mechanical. The other is psychological.

The roller blind in *The Black Art Frame* is a physical simulation of the real background. Two linked rings, held together, physically simulate two separated rings. The diagonal mirror in the mirror production box disguises the load space as empty space. *The Demon of Doom,* Thayer's spike illusion, disguises the passage of a flexible spike around the neck or a wrist. Most choppers or guillotines disguise the substitution of the cutting blade for a duplicate that has passed the obstacle.

The apparatus for the transposition of a bottle and glass physically disguises nested shell bottles as an ordinary bottle. It disguises the transfer of one shell to the location of the ultimate transposition, physically. It disguises one subject, physically, by concealing it with the other. All of these are physical disguises.

The sand in *The Sand Frame* disguises the frame containing the card as an empty frame. *Sawing a Woman In Half*—the most common version—disguises two women as two separate parts of one woman. This, too, is a physical disguise. Another apparatus for the same effect, different in method, disguises an entire woman as two separated halves. A single ring and a key ring, interlinked, physically disguise the separable pair as a permanently welded one.

The folding sausage is disguised as a solid one. The feather bouquet is disguised as real flowers. The forcing deck of cards is physically disguised as a pack of different cards. *The Lota Bowl* is disguised as a simple bowl or vase. The weighted clock hand is disguised as a simple spinning pointer. The mechanism for operating *The Dr. Q Rapping Hand* is disguised as a simple board. The form used in *The Ashrah Levitation* is disguised as a covered woman.

Everywhere one investigates, side by side with the true, the genuine and the real, may be found the disguise. If everything in the entire deception process were disguised, there would be no effective deception. This is because *the effectiveness of the disguise rests in the spectator's lack of knowledge of when it is being employed. Where what is genuine and true is mixed with that which is an imitation, or that which is disguised so that it will not be recognized, there is no clue demarking reality and pretense*.

Yet the disguise is much *less* effective, if it is used solely *for* the direct accomplishment of the trick. If it is used to accomplish the trick only, the magician's apparatus still remains a magician's special tool in external appearance. For example: The production box that employs a mirror. Such boxes usually are decorated extravagantly, decorated in a manner that bespeaks nothing but frankly magician's apparatus, fashioned for nothing but a magician's purpose. Obviously it is a magician's tool. It is a tool, as is developed during the trick, for the purpose of allowing a magician to produce a number of articles from what is apparently an 'empty space. But its emptiness is only apparent, even to the most gullible spectator. It cannot be empty. Things are taken from it.

Since the spectator is familiar with nothing like it, this spectator knows it to be a special piece of magicians' apparatus. If it is a special tool for magicians, it is not strange that he can take things from it. Like the typewriter, which is a tool for writing letters… Or like the teletype, which is a tool for typing telegraph messages… Or like the phonograph, which is a tool for reproducing music… There is nothing—and I repeat it—*nothing* deceptive about them. Equally, there is nothing deceptive about a tool for magicians. Many people do not understand the workings of a typewriter, or the Teletype, or the phonograph. Yet they

are not deceived or mystified or deluded by these devices.

They know that through some mechanism, which they could understand if they cared to investigate it, the apparent magical effect is accomplished. In the case of the typewriter, the Teletype or the phonograph, they are not perplexed, amazed, confused, puzzled, deluded. Nor are they experiencing any of the results of a "mental impression of a supernatural agency at work." That cannot be expected. They can place their fingers upon the very tool that accomplishes the result.

What is different about an obviously magical tool?

Let us grant that the spectator cannot explain where the production comes from in the production box. Now J would like to ask you, , 'Do you know exactly how a typewriter works, common as it is?" If your typewriter were broken, could you put it together? Can you explain the exact working of the Teletype? Or the electric phonograph? Let us make it easy. Can you explain the working of the vacuum tube in the phonograph's amplifier?

Then why should not the spectator have a similar attitude toward a magician's tools?

The ultimate spectator reaction to a successful trick may vary. The spectator may be perplexed. This means that *his thoughts are drawn by turns in different directions* toward contrasting or contradictory conclusions. Perplexity is caused by want of full and definite knowledge.

The spectator may also be confused. This is a state in which *the mental faculties are thrown into chaos*. There is no clear and distinct action of the different mental powers. Bewilderment is akin to confusion, but it is not so overwhelming.

Delusion of the spectator would involve misleading his *mind*. He has a mistaken conviction that involves some mental error.

On the other hand, if he is laboring under some illusion, he has been misled by some mistaken belief, a belief wholly due to being misled by his *senses*.

But he might be beguiled, instead. If this is the case, he has been deceived through *cunning or craft*.

If the ultimate effect is mystification, the spectator experiences a state of being involved in something difficult to understand, something that might even be beyond human comprehension.

I think none of these prevail when a person witnesses the radio, television or the electric eye for the first time. If the person involved is particularly interested in the workings of these devices, perhaps at first his strongest emotion might be one of perplexity. This is almost the same mental state as that experienced when one first encounters a new puzzle.

But I feel certain this is not the ultimate mental state desired by the magician as the result of his deception.

As long as the trick is produced by a tool, or something that the spectator may assume is a tool, I am quite certain the spectator s ultimate reaction would not be the desired one.

That is why I stated a few lines back that disguise is much less effective, if it is used solely for the direct accomplishment of the trick.

Disguise may be used again. Disguise may be used to strengthen the effect. Disguise may be used to supplement its use for the accomplishment of the trick. *Disguise may be used to disguise the tool*, to make the apparatus look unlike a special device for a special purpose.

The special production tool may be disguised to look like a hat, which does not appear to be a special magician's tool. It

may be disguised to look like a filing case, or a gift box, or a cash box. It may be disguised to look like something that the spectator knows is not a magician's tool.

Then, if properly used, the spectator does not accept it as a magician's special tool. He accepts it as the article with which he is familiar. To him it is a filing case, a gift box, a cash box, a cigar box, or anything else that the magician may choose. If these things are common things, objects with which the spectator is familiar, this spectator will accept them in terms, as he *knows them*. He will assume the device to be the same as the common articles with which he is acquainted.

Then the deception is stronger.

The deception is stronger because the common article is quite without special preparation, in the spectator's experience. This, then, in the spectator's opinion leaves nothing with which the magician may accomplish his trick, no mechanism complex or simple—with which to do what he seems to be doing.

Here the disguise is becoming psychological.

The disguise is becoming psychological because it is calculated to influence the processes of the mind. It shapes the spectator's conclusions and understanding, rather than just his perceptive senses.

Understanding, I remind you again, is what we learn through the senses, *influenced by reasoning*. Deception is an attack on the understanding. Therefore, deception is an attack on what we learn through the senses, influenced by reasoning.

Deception through the senses only is not as strong as deception which not only attacks the senses but also influences the reasoning. Disguise which deceives the senses is not as strong as disguise which deceives both the senses and the reasoning.

Therefore psychological disguise is a more powerful tool for the magician.

Disguise, as has been demonstrated in this chapter, may be physical only. It may be, also, physical and psychological. In the latter event it is more effective for deception.

But disguise may be entirely psychological. It may attack the mind without being physical in nature at all. Here you have the strongest possible type of disguise for the magician's purpose.

MAGIC
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CHAPTER TWELVE

Just what response should a magician expect to stimulate in his spectators?

I have indicated what I believe should be the overall objective *for* magicians. This is the substance of *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS*. But by the nature of his medium of entertainment, the magician must have a secondary objective. This objective is the response aroused in the spectators as the result of his impersonation of a magician, an impersonation of a person employing a supernatural agency.

It is only an impersonation. Let this be clearly understood. It is merely a representation, in the magician's definite knowledge. Definitely, to the average spectator, it is nothing more than make-believe magic.

So, since everybody understands that the magician is not really accomplishing miracles, since all know that the magician is not employing supernatural agencies, it can hardly be expected that the response to modern magicians should be similar to the spectator response were it possible for the performer to accomplish real magic.

If real magic were being exhibited, the emotion aroused would be akin to wonderment, amazement, mystification and awe. But none of these reactions would carry any connotation of an ability on the part of the spectator to understand how they were accomplished. There would be no implication of a problem that might be solved. This is because real magic is accomplished through supernatural means, and the supernatural simply is not fathomable by mere mortal mind.

Rarely, you may be certain, will the magician encounter any response like this with the average spectator.

On the other hand, any emotion aroused by the modern magician will always carry connotations of a problem with a solution. It follows, then, that the response will include states like perplexity, puzzlement, bewilderment. All of these are a species of bafflement.

If the spectator is puzzled, he is mentally baffled by such complication or intricacy that his mind finds solution difficult. But he knows there is a reasonable, natural solution.

If the spectator is perplexed, his puzzlement is further complicated by implications of uncertainty as to the right solution. Yet, still accepted is the certainty of there being a natural solution.

A bewildered spectator experiences a bafflement akin to perplexity, but bewilderment stresses a confused state of mind that makes clear thinking practically impossible.

And so one may go on and find the spectators distracted, nonplussed, confounded, frustrated, thwarted and circumvented. Still present, completely eliminating any possibility of suspicion of supernatural agencies, therefore eliminating any responses related in any way to those which come from a supernatural stimulus, is the knowledge that the magician's method is solvable. What he seems to do, impossible as it seems, becomes a problem and a challenge to the spectators. The effect seems to say, "Figure it out if you can!"

Thus, when we encounter the word *mystify* in connection with a magician's performance-white magic, not black-we encounter two *different* meanings and senses. One meaning, the one used with real magic, implies an incapacity for comprehension by the human reason. But there is no such implication in connection with modern magic. Modern magic is capable of being comprehended by the human reason. It is not a miracle. It is a solvable problem.

When we say that a spectator is *mystified*, referring to our magic, we mean that he is *baffled*. His bafflement is a species of perplexity *caused by concealing important facts or factors* or *by obscuring the issues*. In this sense only is *mystify* a valid word to use in connection with a magician's performance.

Since bafflement and its various shades of meaning, including mystification, mean frustration by confusion-by concealment of important factors and by making intricate-successful deception is exactly the act of doing these things plus blocking the spectator from penetrating through them to solution of the problem.

The entire result is achieved through the spectator's mind. What this spectator perceives through his senses simply is not important, if his mind is not deceived.

Let us go back a few decades. Prior to the time of Robert-Houdin, magicians concealed assistants in deeply draped tables. When the magician wanted to cause something to disappear or change, he deposited the thing on this table and covered it. The assistant would then remove the object or exchange another in its place, under the cover. As far as the sense perceptions were concerned, the spectators had witnessed a trick. The eyes saw something disappear or transformed to something else.

But the mind was not convinced-not while all of that space was available for hiding a hireling. Was the spectator mystified? Now suppose a pair of mirrors was used below the tabletop, a pair of mirrors similar to that used in *The Sphinx Head* illusion. This would make the space below the tabletop appear to be open, with no space for the concealment of an assistant.

Now the perceived thing is not contradicted by thought processes. It is deceiving because the understanding supports the senses.

Definitely, the important thing to attack in successful deception is the mind. And equally definitely, this factor of disguise, discussed in the last chapter, is most important when it is directed at the mind and understanding.

Psychological disguise takes several forms.

One of the most important forms of disguise to circumvent the understanding is simulation.

It has been made clear before in this work that simulation is the act of presenting an imitation to the spectator's perceptive senses. It is the assumption of an appearance similar to something else than it truly is. It is a counterfeit appearance.

Psychological simulation, one form of psychological disguise, is simulation that influences the mind principally. It reaches the consciousness of the spectator in such a manner that it sways the understanding. It may be physical in character, but it is of such a nature that its effect is principally upon the spectator's understanding, rather than upon his perceptions.

Especially, psychological simulation is behavior.

In *The French Drop* sleight mentioned previously, when the right hand pretends to take the ball from the left, the right hand physically simulates containing the ball. It gives an imitation of a hand that contains something. It assumes a physical position similar to that which the hand would assume, if the ball actually were held.

The physical phases of the simulation, while necessary, are not the convincing ones necessarily, however. It is principally due to the *way* the performer acts that the spectator's mind is convinced.

Let the magician take this pretended ball with the identical simulation physically. but let him forego any supporting behavior. Instead, suppose he were to allow his eyes to linger upon the left hand, where the ball secretly reposes. Suppose the words he were to use, and his tone of voice, were to convey some degree of uncertainty. Suppose any sort of lack of convincingness and naturalness should become evident. *Suppose any of his behaviors were in conformance with the true state of affairs.* Imagine that the performer meticulously observes every detail necessary for successful physical simulation. But if his behavior, his attitude, every subtle nuance does not conform to, and support, the physical simulation, he will not deceive the spectator. How can he, if he goes through the motions with his behavior telling the spectator that the ball is not in the right hand?

The psychological simulation necessary is not difficult here. If the magician actually were to take the ball in his right hand, his attention would follow the location of the ball. This is because the ball is the subject. It is the center of interest. Since the left band no longer contains the subject of the trick, the performer's interest in that hand is finished. The performer must, also, convince himself that the ball is in the right hand. This carries with it all of the little subtle psychological gestures, attitudes, behavior, that would be evident if the ball were in the right hand. What the performer says, and his manner of saying it, is influenced by the presence of the ball in his right hand. He must not do anything with his right hand that he could not do if it actually contained the ball.

When the magician apparently produces a large bowl of water from beneath a foulard, his arm gives the physical simulation of the presence of the bowl. But the posture of his body, the tension of the muscles of his arm and legs and back-all-simulate the presence of the bowl and its weight. The expression on the performer's face reflects the physical tension. It reflects his care and anxiety not to spill the water on the floor or upon himself. The words and the tone of voice are directed at the presence of the bowl.

In a like manner, the performer who simulates placing the egg beneath his armpit in *The Egg Bag* routine, psychologically simulates the presence of the egg in addition to the physical simulation of keeping the arm pressed tightly against the body. His attitude seems to convey just the opposite intent to the spectators. He seems to desire them not to realize where this egg is. Yet, through behavior, expression, attitude, voice, he unmistakably convinces the spectator that the egg is beneath his armpit, if his enactment of the necessary details is convincing, and if something that has gone before has not betrayed this to be but a bit of by play.

When Frakson simulates the plucking of a cigarette or a coin from the air, the mere revelation of the cigarette or the coin is not sufficient. No. First, he sees the object. Then he indicates where it is, with an expression of happiness that it is there. Then he goes through the physical simulation of reaching for it. When it is revealed, he eyes it, with some astonishment that it was actually there. Then he expresses joy that he succeeded in getting it. And, having gotten it, he looks for more. Everything he says and does conveys the idea that the cigarettes are invisibly floating about in the air. Nothing he says or does conveys that the cigarettes are actually secreted somewhere about his person.

Cardini's production of fans of cards is similar. If his simulation stopped with the mere physical simulation of plucking the fans from the air, he would not be the superlative deceptionist that he is. Anybody-well, almost anybody-can backpalm a fan of cards and reproduce them at his fingertips. But very few have the acting ability of this superb performer. More than his technical skill, more than his ability to hold a number of cards concealed behind his hand, is his acting ability which is directed toward psychologically simulating the catching of cards from the air. The psychological simulation sells the presence of the cards in the air. The actual production of the cards merely confirms it.

In *The Grant Rope Trick* it is necessary, at one portion of the routine, to simulate cutting a rope. Actually, the ends, which the performer seems to create by the cutting of the rope, are there all the time. The performer does not cut the rope. He merely simulates cutting the rope. Since he does not cut the rope, there can be no actual physical simulation of the act. All he can do physically is to go through the necessary motions. The psychological simulation has to convince the spectator. The physical effort necessary to cut the rope must be evident. The timing of the dropping of the ends must conform to the timing that would occur if the rope were actually cut. The *performer's* attention must be concentrated upon the act of cutting. This attention must linger just so long. Then, the rope having been cut, the performer turns his attention to new phases. But everything-the expression on the face, the look of concentration, the muscular strain necessary to operate the scissors, the dropping of the ends, the movement of the hands, what is said and its manner of being said-all of these details must simulate cutting a rope.

When a performer does *The Turban Trick*, he makes the necessary hitch to cut a short end and simulates picking up the center of the long piece of cloth. It is a physical simulation, of course. But accompanying it are other subtle details of psychological simulation, such as the performer's attitude toward the portion held out for cutting and his attitude toward the spectator who is to do the cutting. He must not hold this out as if, perhaps, he is afraid the spectator may guess that the portion indicated is not the center. The performer convinces himself, even though he knows better, that the indicated portion is actually the center of the turban. And he so conducts himself.

The mentalist who holds a sealed billet to his forehead simulates reading it mentally. Here the simulation is almost entirely psychological. He is giving an imitation of a person reading a billet mentally. He does not read it off rapidly and glibly. His face reveals mental effort. He seems to be laboring under a mental strain. His information seems to come to him slowly and with great difficulty. This information is not exact, at all. It is fragmentary, sometimes ambiguous to the performer. The simulation is almost entirely behavior.

In *The Linking Ring Trick*, when the performer pretends to link together the rings of a chain of two, there is no physical disguise of consequence. The performer simulates taking two separate rings. He simulates causing the substance of one to penetrate the substance of the other. It is a matter of the expression of the face, the handling of the rings, the words said and the manner in which they are said. It includes assuming an attitude bespeaking an ability to cause them to penetrate each other. There is no room permitted for question or doubt. It is a positive action, giving the spectators a positive impression that the magician actually is linking the rings. It is convincingly and naturally and thoroughly acting out a role.

The Human Hen trick requires the performer to simulate taking eggs from the mouth of his assistant, one by one. Actually, of course, the eggs do not come from the assistant's mouth. A hollow half-egg is concealed in the assistant's mouth. It is revealed as each egg is apparently materialized. Without psychological simulation, the performer would appear to be doing just what he does do. It would seem to the spectator that the magician is revealing an egg that he had concealed in his hand, while the assistant retracts the half-egg back into his mouth.

Instead, the performer forces matters to appear as if the egg actually were taken from the assistant's mouth. When it is first seen-I refer to the duplicate egg now-it is seen in a position in which it would be, if it were actually taken from the mouth. The performer uses a handkerchief to grasp the egg, in order that he does not have to touch the saliva-moistened surface. The assistant assumes a position as if he were ejecting the egg into the handkerchief. The performer conducts himself as to words said, behavior, posture, apparent purpose, as if he were actually taking the egg from the assistant's mouth.

When a magician simulates placing something into a container-any kind of a container, a hat, a tube, a can, a box-he goes through the exact motions he would make if the object were actually placed in the container. His attention is upon the hand apparently containing the object. It follows along as the object is placed in the container. The opposite hand, holding the container, adjusts itself to accommodate the additional weight. The performer's attention then follows the apparent presence of the object. Meanwhile, as he would if the object actually were placed in the container, he ignores the hand that formerly seemed to, or actually did, contain the object.

All of these examples narrow themselves down to convincing acting. No matter what type of simulation is used, no matter what the simulation is for, the magician is acting out a role. He must do this well or the simulation will not be effective. He must do it convincingly or he will not convey the impression he is trying to accomplish. He must do it naturally or it will seem

artificial and will arouse suspicions.

The performer who, carrying a card behind an envelope, desires to give the impression that he is taking it from the envelope, goes through every detail of motion and behavior and attitude that he would, if he actually were taking the card from it. He tears open the envelope. He opens it with his finger and peers inside for the card. He reaches in quite naturally. All of his fingers do not go inside. The position of the hand, the attitude of the performer, and his remarks, all are as if the card were being taken from the envelope. But, depending upon the immediate circumstances-location of the audience, the hand used, upon which side of the body the envelope is held-the four fingers or the thumb goes behind the envelope and press upon the card. The performer holds the card, just as he would if he were taking it from the envelope. But he holds it with one side of the envelope sandwiched between the card and the fingers inside the envelope. Then, without flourish or unnecessary gesture, naturally, as he would were he actually taking the card from the envelope, he slides the card up from behind the envelope and into view.

Again, as in all other cases in connection with simulation, the magician has enacted a role convincingly.

MAGIC
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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Good dissimulation depends, too, upon effective acting.

It has been pointed out before, but it is well to reiterate it. Dissimulation is the exact opposite of simulation. Where simulation is disguising a thing to make it appear *similar* to something else, dissimulation is the act of making something appear to be *dissimilar* to what it truly is.

The billiard ball move, mentioned before, illustrates the distinction. The right hand, which is supposed to have taken the ball, simulates its presence in the empty hand. The left hand, which really contains the ball, dissimulates in order to appear to be empty. The left hand appears to be *dissimilar* to what it truly is. It appears to be empty. Actually it is not. So it dissimulates.

Dissimulation, like its opposite, is most effective as a psychological disguise expedient.

Requiring considerable dissimulation on the part of the performer is *The Neyhart Rising Cards*, a trick in which any card called may be made to rise from a shuffled deck. As is quite well known now, *the* essential devices are a special houlette and a special deck of cards. The cards are made with little tabs at one end. The tab is in a different location on each card. The cards are selected by a small lever which operates in a notched slot on the back of the houlette. There is a notch for each card, and placing the lever in the proper notch causes that individual card to rise when the rising mechanism is operated. Motive power for the rising depends upon turning the little thumb crank, also located on the back of the roulette, with the thumb.

The dissimulation becomes necessary in several ways. First, the tabs are delicate. Therefore, the cards must be handled with extreme care. But it is not advisable to betray any solicitude in this direction. No such solicitude is necessary with ordinary cards, which this deck should appear to be.

It should hardly. be necessary to point out that no special deck should appear to be so to the spectator. How often have you done a card trick, perhaps even with an unprepared deck, only to have a curious spectator inquire as to whether or not a trick deck was used? How many magicians have you heard assure an audience that "ordinary" cards are being used? Is this simply to make patter?

Of course not. It is done for the same reason that the use of ordinary-appearing, familiar-looking properties was urged earlier in the text. Just as a property that appears to be a magician's tool lessens the deception, and even eliminates it with certain types of spectators, so does the known use of a trick deck. The trick deck is also a magician's tool. Even though he may not have

any idea whatever as to how it functions, when the spectator becomes aware that an especially prepared deck is used, much of the mystery disappears.

That is why the magician, even instinctively, goes to such great lengths to assure the spectators that an unprepared deck is used. And that is the reason, also, that the magician must dissimulate in his handling of the pack for the Neyhart houlette. If he must handle the deck with extreme care, obviously it is not an ordinary deck. Psychologically, he is assuring the spectators that he handles an ordinary deck when he handles the Neyhart pack with extreme care, *but gives the impression that his handling is quite normal and quite without special purpose*. He dissimulates. He causes the deck to appear to *be dissimilar* to what it is.

The cards in this pack may not be reversed, with some tabs in one direction and others in the other. This fact is concealed by dissimulation. Again, special solicitude is kept from becoming apparent.

Special handling is essential in shuffling this pack. It is necessary to keep the tabs all at one end, and it is necessary in order that the

delicate tabs may not be broken off. It is further necessary to prevent the spectators from seeing these tabs, because in this event the deck would be betrayed as being other than the usual pack. But this special handling must not seem to the spectators to be special. The handling must appear to be quite guileless. The cards, and their handling, must seem to be dissimilar to what they are. Dissimulation is necessary.

All of these are accomplished, of course, by contriving the movements necessary, contriving them so that they do not appear to be for a special purpose. It is extremely difficult to riffle shuffle these cards without damaging the tabs, even if the performer succeeds in concealing them. The overhand haymow shuffle is impossible, with the hands in normal position, because the weight of one end of the pack would have to be supported by the delicate tabs. But the normal position might be varied somewhat. If the cards are held by the sides, instead of at the ends, the tabs are protected somewhat. But this would appear to be special handling and a special position, *unless the way was prepared for this necessity by handling all other cards in previous tricks in this same manner*.

Perhaps it may be necessary to utilize *The Hindoo Shuffle* to make the handling appear less calculated.

In any event, dissimulation in this connection is necessary.

In making the selection of the proper notch with the selector, we are confronted by another move that must be disguised. The performer cannot afford to have the spectators think he is operating some kind of a selection device. He cannot afford to have the spectators think he is operating anything. In the, rising card trick the basic secret to conceal, and the chief deception to stress, is the cause of the effect, the cause of the cards movement upward.

The spectators accept that any card may be caused to rise anyway, if the effect is properly presented. They are not expected to suspect that the cards that rise in the ordinary method have been forced.

If the spectators detect that some sort of secret manipulation is taking place, whether it is the operation of the selector or whether it is the turning of the thumb crank, they are quite likely to give it credit for the motive power for the rising mechanism. Nothing of this character, neither in connection with the selector nor particularly in connection with operating the crank, must become evident to the spectator. Therefore, the performer must dissimulate.

He must make the selecting movement, as well as the rising movement, seem dissimilar to what it really is. Perhaps in one case he may disguise the movement as adjusting the fingers for a more comfortable position to hold the houlette. Perhaps the other motion may be concealed in moving the houlette about so all may see.

But if an alternative, dissimulating and dissembling disguise is not provided, the movement-evident to the even moderately observant spectator-becomes a movement that causes the cards to rise. And the deception is destroyed.

Neither may the performer reveal that something about the trick is receiving his secret attention.

The rising card trick, explained by Tom Sellers some years ago, depending upon a rubber-tipped wand, requires dissimulation. The back of the houlette is open. The card to rise is at the back of the pack. The wand is placed under the arm corresponding to the hand holding the houlette. The tip is out and presses against the back of the card that is to rise. The houlette is lowered slowly. The card remains stationary or, perhaps, is levered up a bit. It seems to be rising from the pack.

Certainly this operation must be made to appear to the spectators as different from what it is. It must seem dissimilar to a movement that might cause the cards to rise. Perhaps, the performer may dissimulate to the extent that any movement on the part of the performer is unnoticed. But disguised in some manner the movement must be.

One card-rising trick, known by several names but listed by Thayer as *The One Hand Houlette Rising Cards*, depends upon the use of a sliding lever. This lever operates at the rear corner of the houlette. One end of the lever is needle pointed. This point engages the back of the rear card, which is the card that is to rise. Pushing upward upon the lever, with the thumb lifts the card.

Dissimulation is necessary to disguise the movement of the thumb as causing the card to rise. It is particularly difficult to conceal the movement of the hand and forearm muscles, even if the thumb itself may be hidden by the angle of the houlette. So, rather than have the fact that there is a movement betrayed to an observant spectator, it might be better to permit the spectators to know that the hand is making a movement. The flexing of the muscles, then, becomes explainable. The signs of the essential movement may be disguised as the signs of an alternative movement. Such an alternative movement might be, again, the turning of the houlette from side to side so all may see.

Even in the oldest known of rising-card methods, that employing the addition of a rigged extra packet, dissimulation is required when the extra load is added to the deck. The addition of the extra cards must appear to be dissimilar to what it really is. It must appear not to be the addition of cards to the deck.

As a matter of fact, almost any method of performing *The Rising Cards* requires some degree of dissimulation somewhere in the routine. This may be in the movement of the performer's body, if gradual pressure against a thread is the method of operation. It may be in disguising the lifting movement, where a stationary thread is looped over a thumb. Or it may be in the handling of the thread in connection with the use of a wrist or pocket reel. Even a clockworks pack, originally credited to Hartz, requires disguising certain operations.

The Passé Passé Bottle and Glass Trick has an excellent example of disguise being required where the shell bottle is stolen within one of the cylinders. The performer dissimulates when he slips the cylinder, which is to steal the shell, over the bottle. Apparently he is merely showing that the tube fits about the bottle closely. Actually he is stealing the outer shell. He causes the action to seem dissimilar to what it really is. It is a loading action, of course. It is disguised as part of the explanation of the apparatus. Further in the text I shall discuss where the same operation is accomplished through a maneuver, instead of dissimulation.

Dissimulation is further required after the shell is stolen. This is in the handling of the cylinder containing the load. To the spectators, the cylinder is empty. It must be so handled. The performer must dissemble, by handling the tube as if it were an empty one, whereas actually the shell bottle is inside. The slightest bit of extra care or solicitude-or, and this should not be necessary, anxiety-will concentrate attention upon the tube because the handling would be a variation from the norm in handling a simple cylinder.

There is an excellent example of vital dissimulation in *The Vanishing Alarm Clock* and its half-brother, *The Vanishing Bowl of Water*. The method referred to, in either case, is where the article to be vanished is attached to the tray. A form built within an opaque handkerchief or foulard simulates the presence of the clock or bowl. In the meantime, the article having apparently been picked up beneath the cloth, the tray is lowered away. But this tray is turned away from the audience, bottom toward the spectators, in order to conceal the subject itself.

At this stage, the clock or bowl, whichever may be the case, is attached to the face of the tray. This tray now is abnormally heavy. In addition it must be handled abnormally because a normal tray is not kept with its underside carefully turned toward the spectators.

Here is where dissimulation is necessary. The tray must be handled lightly, as it would be handled were no special weight attached to it. It must be handled with apparent carelessness so that the surface it presents, and the narrow movement allowed does not seem stiff and calculated. It must be handled without receiving special attention, as would be the case had the clock or bowl actually been taken from it. To the spectators, until some variation from the norm suggests otherwise, this tray is simply a no-longer-necessary accessory.

A well-known production box, sold under various titles among which is *The Wonder Box*, has a secret load container which rotates on a panel in the back door. This box has a door in the back, as mentioned, another in the front and one on top. All three doors are hinged on the same side of the box. The load is concealed within the box as it is shown on all sides. Then the container is rotated to bring it to the rear and the front door is swung open. Finally the back door is opened, carrying with it the container, which is now masked by the opened front door.

The business of rotating the container and routining the opening of the doors is, of course, necessary to conceal the secret load. But dissimulation is necessary on the part of the performer so that the secret rotating of the container does not seem to be some special handling in connection with the secret of the trick. Disguising the necessary movement as some movement the purpose of which is obvious and apparent to the spectators does this. For example:

The rotating container may be turned with the right thumb as the right hand is apparently placed upon the top of the box to steady it, while the front door is opened. The thumb goes behind the box with the fingers on top, as the performer stands behind it. Thus, the front door is now in front of the space where the container will be swung. In order to show the box empty clearly, naturally the top door should be opened before the back one. Not so naturally, but essential to successful concealment of the container from view from above, this top door rests immediately above the space which will be occupied.

Then the back door is opened. It is possible to close the front door first. This indirectly reveals the rear of the back door. The same thumb movement, disguised as steadying the box, will rotate the container again. This brings it to the front of the door, which is the rear side of the door, as it stands open. Under this circumstance, the container is again concealed.

Thus dissimulation is employed in handling the box. The necessary secret operating movements are disguised as some other movements.

Dissimulation is even advisable in the act of taking out the individual items of the load, if the container is occupying a localized space in the production device. This holds true not only of this box, in which case it is not so necessary, but also in connection with other production devices. It is particularly important in connection with *The Jap Box*, where the production comes from a secret compartment built in the side. The dissimulation here takes the direction of making it appear that the production articles come from various places in the device, instead of from the one vicinity all the time.

In *The Egg Bag Trick*, where the egg is concealed in the secret compartment, dissimulation is necessary during the process of showing the bag empty. It is necessary in turning the bag inside Out. It is accomplished through making the movements of turning the bag inside out-reversing it while still keeping the double side of the bag close to the body and concealed-seem natural, unpremeditated and without design. Properly handled, the double side of the bag should always be kept nearest the body. This prevents any unnatural bulges from showing. In itself, this expedient is a species of dissimulation.

But the care in reversing the bag must be concealed. It must not seem to the spectators that such excessive attention is necessary. It must seem that the performer is just turning the bag inside Out, without any restrictions, carelessly. If the spectator detects that the same side of the bag is always presented to the audience, this must not seem significant. It must seem to have occurred quite without design on the performer's part. This is true dissimulation.

Almost the same may be said of other phases of dissimulation in connection with this trick. When the presumably empty

bag is struck against the hand or against a convenient piece of furniture, thus adding to the conviction of emptiness, it must not be evident to the spectator that the performer has grasped the bag at a definite, specific place. This is the actual case, of course. The performer actually grasps the egg through the cloth. He holds the egg within his fingers while he whacks the remainder of the bag. But this must not be apparent. It must not be evident that the performer has sought this specific place for a purpose. Preventing these restrictions from becoming significant is true dissimulation.

In some versions of the egg bag trick, the bag is folded into a small square. The egg is still within the secret compartment. Now the performer crushes the bag together. The bag seems to occupy less space than the total volume of the egg. But the egg is on the side of the parcel nearest the performer. It extends behind the packet, masked by the performer's fingers. The magician must dissimulate in maneuvering the parcel so that the bulk of the egg is unseen. He must dissimulate to conceal the manipulations necessary. He must dissimulate during the crushing process, so that there is no significant clue as to the presence of the egg's bulk.

If the performer places the folded bag upon his hand, patting it flat to assure its emptiness, the spectators cannot be allowed to know that the performer's fingers have been separated to allow the bulge of the egg to extend between them. The deliberate separation of the fingers must be concealed. If the spectator realizes that these fingers actually are spread apart, this fact must not be significant or important. It must not seem important to the magician. Dissimulation, here, is mandatory. The purpose in separating the fingers must seem dissimilar to what it really is.

One of the difficulties confronting the performer of card tricks is in palming cards from the pack. Another is in returning palmed cards to the pack. Invariably these moves must be disguised in some way.

Dissimulation is one of the most effective disguises. When a card is taken from the pack by palming it off, the action must not seem to be that to the spectator. It must seem to be something else. Disguising the action as taking the pack in the hand, in order to free the opposite hand for some other purpose, is one form of dissimulation in this connection. Perhaps the magician merely wishes to gesture to a nearby chair in asking an assisting spectator to take a seat. Perhaps he is reaching for an envelope. It might be that he is gesturing toward a pocket into which he wishes the spectator to place the deck. Or he might be picking up some property such as a handkerchief, a card box, a houlette, a tumbler or anything else connected with the trick.

At any rate, good dissimulation requires that the movement of palming off the card be made to appear to be something else, for some other purpose.

Palming a card back onto the pack requires dissimulation as well. An excuse must he found for bringing the hand to the pack. Actually, good dissimulation begins with which hand is brought to the other. If the performer is taking something from the pack, it is better to give the action a reverse appearance to the spectator. If the performer is taking something from the deck, it should appear as if the deck were being taken from the hand which is secretly doing the palming.

The same may be said of adding palmed cards to the pack secretly. The dissimulation is stronger if the spectator sees the pack brought to the hand. He is less likely to associate the movement with one of adding something to the deck. The normal way of adding cards to a pack is to bring the cards to the pack-moving the cards, not the pack. Here, dissimulation suggests substituting moving the deck and not the hand.

As in the former case, a convincing natural and plausible excuse must be found for bringing the hands together, or for transferring the deck. Straightening the cards in the deck would, of course, be a natural excuse to bring the hands together. But stronger dissimulation is accomplished if a better excuse can be found.

In the case of any object palmed in the hand secretly, whether it is; ball, egg, coin, card or what not, it is necessary that the performer dissimulate with this hand. It must seem empty, even though, in fact, it is not. The band must be handled as an empty one. It must not receive the performer's solicitous attention in any degree. There must be no apparent muscular or mental tension in connection with the hand.

This hand contains something. It is desired that it appear to contain nothing. Dissimulation insures the attainment of that

objective because it stresses disguising the hand to appear dissimilar to what it really is.

Buckley's version of *The Thirty Card Trick* has the usual first packet of fifteen cards counted out. Three cards are selected from this packet by the audience, and marked. These are returned to the packet and brought to the top. After the packet is false shuffled, the selected cards still being on top of the fifteen, the packet is counted once more by the spectator. This brings the selected cards to the bottom of the pile.

The performer now puts the fifteen cards in an envelope. But only twelve cards go into the envelope. The three bottom cards are slid behind the envelope. This is accomplished by dissimulation. Three cards are being separated from the others. But this act of separation is made to appear merely as the placing of the cards in the envelope. The envelope is held with the address side toward the spectators, with the flap up. In the act of placing the cards in the envelope, the rear side of the envelope is sliced between the desired three and the others, as the cards are held slightly fanned. In an action that exactly duplicates placing these cards in the envelope, the desired three slip behind it.

The flap is then sealed.

The envelope containing the twelve cards is left in the left hand, masking and covering the three selected ones. The second envelope is shown and is placed in the left hand, behind the sealed envelope and in front of the three selected cards. This whole series of moves, preparatory to stealing the vital three cards, is, of course, a maneuver. But dissimulation on the part of the performer is necessary here. It must appear that the second envelope is placed in the left, behind the sealed one, quite by chance and without any particular design. It must seem so naturally and convincingly.

Continuing with the Buckley routine: Immediately after the second envelope is returned and placed in the hand, another spectator is asked to count out another pile of fifteen cards. During this action, the performer seems to remember the sealed envelope. He hands it to the first assistant.

When the second pile has been counted, the performer takes the empty envelope, carrying the selected cards behind it, and places it upon the second pile. This adds the selected three to the pile just counted. The spectator is asked to cut the cards and to place them in the second envelope.

Dissimulation comes into the picture when the empty envelope is picked up. It is not picked up as what it is-an envelope with three cards concealed behind it. It is picked up and handled as a simple envelope. The action of adding the three selected cards to the second pile is not done under that guise at all, of course. The adding of the cards is disguised as giving the envelope to the assistant. Notice that it isn't done as laying the envelope on the pile of cards. It is done as giving the envelope to the assistant.

There is a nice distinction in the different objectives, even though the action is precisely the same in both cases. Putting the envelope on the pile of cards deliberately would be purposeless, except for some secret accomplishment for the magician. Giving the envelope to the spectator has an apparent purpose to the spectator, a purpose apart from any secret maneuvering in connection with the trick. The actual act of turning the envelope over to the spectator may take many forms. It may be handed to him. It may be pointed out to him. Or it may be placed in a location convenient for him.

The accomplishment of the secret loading is best served in this case by disguising the secret addition of the cards in the act of making the envelope more convenient for the spectator. Thus is the dissimulation accomplished.

Dissimulation is probably the most often utilized expedient in the entire category of deceptive stratagems. When the *Dr. Q Rapping Hand* is being operated, it is necessary to resort to it to cover the visible flexings of the muscles as the secret screw is pushed. It is necessary in connection with *The Dr. Q Spirit Slates*. It covers the releasing of the locked flaps. It is necessary to supply an excuse for a peek at the slates in order to insure that the flap is properly in place, so that it may be properly locked in place after the message is in position to be seen. It is even necessary to cover the slight noise made by the action of the flap.

There is hardly a trick in magic that does not somewhere during its performance require something to be disguised as

dissimilar to what it truly is. It disguises a condition, as in the secretly empty or secretly occupied hand. It disguises a manipulation, a movement or an operation, such as with the card houlette or the production box. It covers special preparation, special requirements, special restrictions. It overcomes difficult obstacles. It changes the spectator's sense of significant situations and suspicious handicaps. It disguises the secret presence or absence of something. It disguises purposes, reasons and clues that might be suspicious.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Back in Chapter Five the maneuver was particularized at some length. But it might be well to restate it again here. The maneuver is the management and manipulation of circumstances and actions. This contrivance of situations and affairs is planned with skill and an unerring surety. Actually it is a series of movements, all inter-related, executed with skill and a sure perception of the reactions of the spectators. It is planned definitely, for a definite purpose. It is planned to meet and overcome difficult and dangerous situations.

The entire routine making up the Kellar presentation of *The Flower Growth* is a maneuver. It is maneuver at its most deceptive. Not only is it an adroit and dexterous arrangement of moves and conditions, but it is a series of routined actions that expertly probes the gullibilities of the spectators successfully. So ingeniously concealed are the various movements involved, so dexterously planned are the expedients to cover the various essential actions, that the members of the audience are totally unaware as to when and how they have been hoodwinked.

Perhaps an effective maneuver employed by the writer in the performance of *The Passé Passé Bottles* might serve as a less complex illustration.

As is well known by most magicians, this bottle and glass transposition begins with a glass at one location and with two nested bottle shells, covering a duplicate glass, at another place. The effect is that the bottle and glass change places while covered with cylinders.

In order to accomplish the trick it is necessary to steal the outermost shell bottle in a cylinder which eventually will be used to cover the glass. Normally this is secured in the act of showing that the

cylinders both fit around the bottle somewhat snugly.

However, when I used to perform this trick, I found it advisable to vary the routine somewhat. The shell bottles, covering the duplicate glass, were placed upon a light stand at the right, as the performer faces the audience. On a similar stand at the left was the glass.

After showing both cylinders, one was put over the bottle and the other was used to cover the glass. The first section of the presentation was merely a hoax. I pretended to transpose the bottle and glass. Then, without showing them having passed, I pretended to cause them to pass back to their original locations.

But as I took the cylinder from the bottle, I took it with my left hand. This would be the hand normally nearest the glass, it being on the stand on my left. As I took this cylinder with my left, I took the outer shell of the bottle with it. Then, going to the stand on the left, I revealed the glass as having returned to its original location by picking up that cylinder with my right hand.

All of this took place during the by-play, which the audience recognized as a hoax. But it permitted the shell to be stolen when the attention was upon what the lifting of the shell revealed. No one particularly noticed—or cared at this stage of the game—which hand was employed. The same may be said of the tube taken from the glass. Using the right hand was perfectly normal and natural because the left hand held the first cylinder.

Then, as I stood facing the audience, I was in perfect position to place the tube containing the bottle shell over the glass, it being in my left hand which was the hand nearest the glass. The same held true of my right hand. This maneuver carried the shell to the glass without any suspicious movements. It eliminated the weak excuse of slipping the cylinders over the bottle to show that they both would fit over it. I did not care for the original move because it seemed to me to be pointless. Here, the more involved and complicated maneuver effectively and unobtrusively accomplished the necessary objective.

Notice that this was a routined series of movements. It was a planned and managed succession of actions for the purpose of accomplishing an essential part of the deception. It was not a single isolated move. Rather it was a planned series. This distinctive identification—the series of moves as contrasted with a single action—is the essential mark of the maneuver.

On page 128 of *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS* is the beginning of an explanation of the mechanics and routine I use for the Quong Hi cabinet trick. This is a complex device. Successful deception depends upon an involved maneuver in showing the cabinet and in the presentation of the trick. While there are several mechanical features in the device itself, successful deception is almost entirely due to the series of carefully worked out moves necessary to accomplish the operation of the device. Many of these moves are actually part of the mechanics of operating the trick but they are disguised as part of the presentation and are so accepted by the spectators.

Without this planned series of connected actions successful deception is almost impossible. Single isolated actions are impossible because the integration of one with the other is absolutely necessary.

This necessity of integrating the series of movements is the distinguishing feature of the maneuver. Each successive action must not be considered as an individual operation. It must be looked upon as a part of a whole unit. Elimination of one movement in the series would destroy the whole.

Consider *You-Do-As-I-Do* in its most familiar form. This, too, was discussed in *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS*. The effect, as is well known, is that the performer and spectator, each, selects a card from the pack of cards he holds. Each person replaces his card on the top of his respective deck and cuts it to the center. The packs are exchanged and each person finds his own card in the pack formerly used by the other. When the cards are turned over, both cards are found to be the same.

This deception is made possible by a maneuver. The performer knows the key card at the bottom of the spectator's pack. When the spectator selects his card from his pack and replaces it on the top, cutting the pack brings this key card immediately above the spectator's card. When the packs are exchanged the performer merely finds the key card and takes the card below it. This is the spectator's selection. Of course, in the meantime, the spectator has found his card in the deck originally handled by the performer.

Why must this series of moves be considered as a unit, rather than as a series of separate actions? Because the ultimate result depends upon *the entire series*, not upon any single action. The entire deception rests upon the integrated whole.

It is not at all necessary for the performer to go through his first action of selecting a card from his pack. He pays no attention to this card anyway. The identity of the card has no bearing upon the result. *But the* act of *apparently selecting a card has*. Eliminate this first, otherwise purposeless, action and you destroy the deception. Remember the deception is that each person selects the same card apparently. Eliminate the first selection by the performer and you change the deception to one wherein the performer merely discovers the identity of the card selected by the spectator.

This is what happens anyway, of course. *But it is not what the spectator's understanding leads him to believe*. The spectator's mind is convinced that he is witnessing a trick of sympathy, not one of an identity discovery.

Realize the power of the spectator s understanding coupled with his perceptions. Realize the effectiveness of the attack on the spectator's understanding. Realize how the perceptions are entirely deceived through this attack on the spectator's understanding. The perceptions see the performer look at a card. They also see the spectator look at a card. The perceptions see the two people exchange decks. They see each person seek a specific card from the deck he now holds. They see that the cards are identical.

But the understanding goes further than that. The understanding thinks that the performer notes his first card. But he does not. The understanding thinks the packs are exchanged so that each person may find the card he first looked at in the other person's pack. The understanding believes that both persons are seeking the card first noted. But they are not, of course. The spectator is looking for the card he noted. The performer is not. He is looking for the card the spectator first noted.

But to go back to the utter necessity of connecting this series of essential actions: As was mentioned before, the performer's act of looking at his first card cannot be eliminated without destroying the deception. The act of placing both cards on top of the packs and cutting them to the center cannot be eliminated. On one hand, the performer's act is necessary to maintain the deception. On the other hand, the spectator's act is necessary to identify the card to the performer.

The act of exchanging the packs is essential. Without it, without the exchange instead of the spectator handing his pack to the performer, the deception is impossible, the deception of sympathetic discovery. Fully as essential is the remaining act of each person again finding his own card, apparently, in the opposite pack.

Thus, the whole series of actions, integrated as a unit, becomes a maneuver.

The individual actions in any maneuver may be separately identifiable as those of simulation, dissimulation and the like. But when they are integrated, when this integration is essential *as a unit*, they cease to be separate units and become an individual entity as a maneuver.

In *AL BAKER'S BOOK*, that virtuoso of deception has explained what I have always considered to be one of his masterpieces. The trick in question is *Al Baker's Pack That Cuts Itself*. While the individual moves are separately distinguishable as dissimulation, primarily, the deception is only possible through the carefully planned routine of integrated actions. Without the complete maneuver, the deception is impossible.

The acts of securing the thread, attaching it, carrying over the extra card, adding the first selected card, cutting this card into the pack and adding the second selected card—all—are a single integrated series. They are a single maneuver that depends upon careful interlocking of each portion.

This difference between a carefully integrated series of actions, pointed and planned to a definite objective, and a simple routine of disconnected movements is sometimes difficult to differentiate. The *Mora Wands* is a sympathetic animation accomplished through the use of two hollow pillars. Each pillar is rigged with a cord, terminating in a tassel, which is operated by a sliding weight. While dissimulation is necessary in tilting the pillars so that the sliding weight may or may not become operative, no definitely connected series of movements is necessary in order to accomplish the deception. Aside from the demands of routine, there is no necessity that the movements be in any definite order.

The reverse is the case with Petrie-Lewis' *Cords of Cairo*. In both cases, the ultimate effects are substantially the same. But the mechanism, as explained in *BLACKSTONE'S SECRETS OF MAGIC* under the title of *More Chinese Wands* depends upon a concealed black thread connecting the two cords. It is necessary that the distance the thread traverses be held constant. This is accomplished in a variety of ways. It is essential that the pillars be handled in a particular manner to maintain this distance. Yet the handling of the pillars must not seem to be calculated or planned. Therefore, for the most part the moves are examples of dissimulation. But from the standpoint that these moves must be carefully articulated, one to the other, the entire

series of moves becomes a genuine maneuver.

There are many examples of planned maneuvers in such tricks as *The Linking Rings*, some versions of *The Cups and Balls*, *The Multiplying Billiard Balls*, and others. The deceptive features of *The Organ Pipes Trick* and its related version with water jars, *The German Water Trick*, depend upon articulated successions of actions. Several illusions of the transformation and substitution variety rely upon a planned series of movements by the various characters. Such illusions are *Murder In a Telephone Booth* explained in *SHOWMANSIIIP FOR MAGICIANS*—the screen illusion, called *A Magical Appearance,* explained in the Blackstone book above mentioned; *The Mystery of King Tut, Who and Which, Three Kings and a Queen*—all in the second volume of *The Tarbell Course In Magic*. There are many more of these tricks with humans that are based upon carefully planned series of actions by the various characters. All of them are possible through the deceptive features in the maneuver.

Any trick, the deception of which depends upon a carefully preplanned routine of moves, accomplishes its deception through maneuver and its effect upon the judgment and understanding of the spectator. The deception is accomplished primarily through the interpretation given to what the spectator perceives. This interpretation is definitely shaped by the maneuver's influence upon the spectator's understanding. Without the maneuver the spectator's understanding, as well as his ultimate conclusions, might be entirely different and consequently without deception.

The maneuver is chiefly used to bury significant actions and things in such complicated detail that their significance is totally lost.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The ruse is unique in itself. Disguise it truly is. But it disguises purposes rather than things. It supplies a false reason for doing something, for example, and thus conceals the true purpose of the action. It is a crafty expedient, devised and contrived to divert attention from one's real intent.

In the burned bill trick which was discussed in detail earlier in this work, the pushing of the thumb in the envelope was so contrived that it seemed to be an act of merely opening the envelope preparatory to inserting the banknote. But it was not that, of course. Actually the real purpose of the action was to cut a slit in the face of the envelope so that the bill could be stolen ultimately. Thus, it fulfilled the real function of the ruse. It diverted attention from the real purpose by substituting a false purpose.

In some routines of *The Multiplying Billiard Ball Trick* the vanish of a ball and its apparent recovery from the pocket is a ruse. Apparently the vanish is made for the purpose of demonstrating a transposition. But it is not. The vanish is made to supply an excuse for bringing a new ball from the pocket. This is an added ball, extra to what has already been used and necessary for further multiplication. The real purpose, obtaining a new ball, is disguised as recovering a previously vanished one. It is a cunningly skillful deception as to real purpose.

The familiar *Conjurer's Choice* is a ruse. Disguised as a means of permitting the spectator's free choice, its real purpose is to force the desire of the performer. "The visible or invisible" transposition of the die choice offered in *The Diebox Trick* is a ruse. Disguised as intended for a bit of comedy, its real purpose is to load the solid die in the hat.

Earl DeForrest uses an effective ruse in connection with *The Thumb Tie*. It is used to cover the freeing of his thumbs, after they have been secured in the usual manner. He asks a spectator-assistant to hold up a stick, grasping it by each end. Feigning impatience at the spectator's seeming inability to hold it correctly, he suddenly barks at him sharply, lunging at him as he does so. This is when he frees his thumbs. But at the moment it seems as if the performer might assault his assistant bodily. Thus the movement of freeing the thumbs is disguised as one intended to reprimand the assisting spectator.

This is a dangerous ruse to use, as it could result in ill will to the performer. But it suits DeForrest's style perfectly, as he has a way of doing apparently violent things without antagonizing his spectators. It is taken as part of his style of comedy.

This illustration of an unusual ruse is cited to demonstrate what a broad field the expedient may cover. Notice that it does not necessarily substitute a false purpose for the real one. It *diverts attention from the real purpose*. So anything that diverts attention from the real purpose may be a ruse.

The diversion may be accomplished through substitution of an apparent purpose that is untrue, as stated before. Yet a new interest, as in the DeForrest example cited, may divert attention from purpose entirely.

One of the most difficult situations confronting the card man in the early stages of his experience is palming a card from the pack. There are many ways of securing the card, from the viewpoint of making the necessary move. Sleights for this purpose range from those that are quite easy of execution to the most difficult. So, if he selects a sleight suited to his ability, the magician is not confronted with a task beyond his powers.

But the most subtle of sleights for this purpose is ineffective, as far as deception goes, *if a suitable excuse is not found for having the hands in the required position*. This must be an excuse that would reveal the performer's purpose as other than what it actually is. His real purpose, of course, is to steal a card. Attention must be diverted from this real purpose. Probably the most common diversion would be to substitute another purpose.

Do I anticipate disagreement? All sleights for palming off a card must be done with either one or two hands, obviously. If it is the more difficult single-hand move, there must be a reason for holding the pack in one hand, in the somewhat peculiar position required. Certainly the observant spectator will not view holding the pack in this position as a natural action, ordinarily. He will, however, accept it as being natural, *if it is natural to a purpose that is obvious to him*. If, for instance, the performer should take the pack from his right hand, if he should pick up the pack with his left hand and place it aside, at his left—perhaps to exhibit a card frame, or to take a wallet from his pocket—the position is a natural one. The position of the left hand would be natural to the act of picking up the pack and placing it aside. The identical position would also be the proper one for the one-hand steal.

His dissimulation with the left hand, now burdened with the stolen card, would not have to be so vital. With the proper ruse, the spectator's scrutiny would not be upon the left hand. The spectator's suspicions would not be fixed upon the left band. Why? Because the performer's use of his hands, at this particular stage of the proceedings, would be natural. There would be a reasonable and unsuspicious reason for the performer's hand having come in contact with he pack—even having come in contact in the special position necessary.

But take away this alternative purpose. Eliminate an excuse for handling the pack in this manner, an excuse which seems reasonable to the spectator. Immediately the spectator's suspicions are aroused.

Isn't it obvious that he would suspect that the magician had removed a card? Why else would he have his hand on the pack? With suspicion fastened upon a hand concealing a stolen card, the degree of dissimulation necessary to shake off the scrutiny would be high indeed. With an object as large and as awkward to handle as a card, few can successfully dissemble to that extent.

So a ruse—not necessarily the one cited, however—is absolutely essential for effective deception.

The same holds true of the two-handed methods of palming off a card. An alternative purpose, one that is natural and reasonable to the spectator, is required. Many card men use squaring up the pack as a ruse, others seem to place the pack in the hand perhaps, placing it in the right with the left. The sleight, of course, is accomplished at the moment the two hands are together, the card being palmed in the right, which retains the pack momentarily. Meanwhile some task is performed with the left—perhaps that hand has been used for a necessary gesture, or to indicate someone or something, or to arrange something. The left hand's task having been accomplished, it takes the pack again, leaving the right in possession of the card.

Palming a card onto the deck is quite similar. A reasonable alternative excuse must be found for bringing the hand to the pack. Or for bringing the pack to the hand containing the card. It must be a good, convincing purpose that is made evident to the spectator.

In connection with cards, Robert Madison, of Santa Rosa, Calif., uses an effective ruse with the finger break. The spectator peeks at a card by lifting up the index corner of the pack. When the spectator allows the pack to fall back together

again, the pack having been held in the performer's hand meanwhile, the performer inserts the fleshy portion of a finger in the opening and holds a break. The card above the break is, of course, the one peeked at by the spectator.

Now comes the ruse. With the ostensible purpose of demonstrating to another what he wants done, the performer boldly pulls back the cards at the break, picking up the index corner and actually showing the previously selected card to the spectator, meanwhile looking at it himself;

Had he pulled back the corner and looked at the card without using the demonstration excuse, the spectators would have been certain that he was identifying the previous card. But disguised by the ruse, this idea never occurs to them. It seems a natural thing—even an unsuspicious thing—for the magician to show the spectator just how he wants the latter to select a card.

In one of the mental tests developed by Ted Annemann a word is written within an oval inscribed upon a previously folded slip of paper. After the word is written the spectator refolds the billet and hands it to the performer. Forthwith the magician tears it up. He places the pieces in an ash tray and sets fire to them. Ultimately the magician reveals the word. Of course, he has stolen out that portion of the billet that contains the word, and has managed to read it.

A ruse has made it possible. The performer, of course, could not tear out that portion of the billet containing the message, deliberately. The real purpose is disguised as destroying the billet. Perhaps he may use another ruse to actually read the word. He may hold the paper fragment in the palm of his hand. Then, bringing his hand to his forehead, seemingly for the purpose of intensifying his concentration, he reads the word.

The familiar one-ahead message reading method owes its effectiveness to the ruse. The performer's real purpose is to read the contents of the note. But his purpose, from the spectator's viewpoint, seems to be to verify a previously divined billet.

In the familiar *Cards To The Pocket* many performers use an ostensible purpose of showing the pocket empty as a ruse to disguise loading cards into the pocket. In the act of turning the pocket inside out, the performer's hand, containing the cards, goes into the pocket. It drops the cards, tucks them into the space at the top of the pocket, and pulls the pocket lining out. The spectators believe the performer's purpose is to show the pocket empty. The performer's real purpose is to load the cards.

Many performers use a ruse to disguise the execution of the pass by riffling the cards.

The ruse has been used in illusion work.

One example that comes to mind is a transposition illusion. Two people dress in different costumes. One of the actors has a substitute waiting off stage. This substitute wears a duplicate costume. After the costumes have been donned, the actor, whose substitute is waiting, apparently steps off stage to get some property that has been overlooked—perhaps a piece of rope. In lieu of the original actor, the substitute brings on the property and goes on with the performance. This might, perhaps, allow the original actor to make his way to the rear of the audience. The substitute performer is vanished and the original actor immediately comes running down from the rear of the audience.

Here, the real purpose for stepping off stage is disguised by a ruse.

A well-known rising card method utilizes a short length of thread. One end is secured to a coat or vest button, and the other end is affixed to the top of the card to rise. The card is caused to rise by hooking the thumb or a finger beneath the thread. Lifting the hand causes the card to rise from the pack to the hand. But a ruse disguises the purpose in lifting the hand. The actual purpose, of course, is to lift the card from the pack. But the performer disguises the action as a magical—almost magnetic—lifting motion.

In *The Sympathetic Silks Trick* the conventional count move is a ruse. The hand containing the pair of silks apparently goes to the opposite hand to pick up another silk. Actually the real purpose is to exchange the separated pair for the connected three. Again a ruse is employed to disguise the act of disconnecting the three tied silks. Apparently still tied together, the silks are folded over. But the motion of slipping the silks apart is disguised as folding them over. The purpose projected to the audience is

entirely different from the actual one.

To the magician, as is evident from studying it, the ruse is chiefly valuable for disguising an essential move that cannot be concealed. At the same time, this essential move is one which, were it not given a plausible purpose alternatively, might not be effective in its deception. Diverting the attention from the performer's real purpose, if the ruse is intelligently planned and expertly executed, will accomplish an interpretation to the spectator that will fit the purposes of the deceptionist.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

We have seen how disguise has made things seem to be something else. We have, as well, witnessed disguise being employed to make things seem different from what they are. Also, significant things have been disguised making them seem insignificant or by submerging them in miscellaneous details. Finally, we have even cloaked purposes so that they are not recognized for what they truly are.

Deeper and deeper we are probing into the mind of the spectator. More and more we are influencing the perceptions of that spectator so that things reach his mind with an illumination of the deceptionist's coloring. He is seeing things the way the magician wants him to. Not as they truly are.

Even deeper we drive the probe now.

The very act of leading him is disguised. Through suggestion and inducement, the performer enters the spectator's mind casually-gently-indirectly. The very conclusion, to which the spectator is insidiously and inexorably driven, may seem to the spectator to be of his own persuasion. But it is not.

His judgment and understanding are influenced through indirect and guarded presentations by the deceptionist, presentations shaped to the interests and objectives of the performer.

The magician's suggestion is a subtle but positive act of putting something into the mind of the spectator. This biased stimulus instigates a mental process by means of which the spectator responds to the influence of the performer. Often through a progression of ideas, the desires of the performer are entertained, accepted and even put into effect.

Actually the spectator makes an uncritical acceptance-whether it be of a statement, of an idea or of a proposal-this spectator being temporarily docile and submissive to the influence of the deceptionist.

And if, perhaps, the spectator does not yield to the suggestion of the performer, he may be moved through influencing his reasoning and judgment. In this manner he is induced by persuasion, by influence or by allurements. In spite of the fact that the magician is the moving force, it may seem, even to the spectator, that the spectator's decision is voluntary, made by himself-as, indeed, it may be instead of forced upon him by the performer.

But the invoking of either suggestion or inducement, or both, is actually disguised force.

Let us see how suggestion works.

It is something like hypnotism. In the beginning, the performer may start with facts, truths of which the subject is definitely and conclusively aware. Gradually the deceptionist leads the mind of the spectator from these known facts to things which the spectator himself may not personally know to be true, but things which are feasible, reasonable, possible. From the realm of the unfamiliar, but reasonable and possible, the spectator is lured to the improbable-even to the impossible.

A mind reader picks up a sealed billet. The spectator knows that a question has been written and sealed inside. He knows that the mentalist cannot read the message. He knows that the contents of the message are clearly evident in his own mind. He has heard stories of thought transmission from one mind to another. Perhaps, he himself has experienced something bordering on similar phenomena. Externally, the mentalist seems to be straining to divine the question. It is highly unlikely, the spectator knows, that, even if he can grasp the sense of the question, he can discern the writing literally. And the performer is apparently verifying this fact. Even though he seems to be getting the sense of the question, the mentalist clearly demonstrates that what he gets is fragmentary. The performer's very manner reflects uncertainty. He is groping, as he would if thought reading or divination were possible. Finally, the kernel of the thought is there, even if the actual question itself is not verbatim.

By suggestion, the magician has demonstrated an ability to read a sealed question.

But the performer may go further. Now he may employ inducement, in the form of an apparent demonstrated fact, to persuade the spectator that he has actually witnessed the divination of a written message. This may influence his powers of reasoning and judgment. Then, through the always alluring possibility that something in the future may be revealed to him, facts which would be of intense and vital importance, the spectator is induced to give credence to what the mentalist predicts for the future.

In the field of mental endeavor, tell me, what disguises-except disguised forcing of the spectator's reason and judgment-do the demonstrators employ?

A spectator holds a wooden pencil between his hands, holding it by the ends. The performer brings a folded dollar bill down upon the pencil gently, as if to mark the spot of impact. It comes down once, twice. Then with a violent sweep, the pencil is apparently broken in two-fractured with a mere piece of paper. Suggestion does the work. It forces the spectator to assume that the bill has broken the pencil. But it has not, of course. Yet each time the bill was brought in contact with the pencil, prior to the actual breaking, the banknote was silently suggesting, "I am going to do something to the pencil...I am going to do something to the pencil."

The magician takes a ball or an orange. Once, twice he makes a tossing motion. The action is telling the spectator's mind, "This is going to be thrown into the air. This is going to be thrown into the air."

At the same time, it is showing the spectator: "It is going to go up this way-up this way." And the spectator's attention follows along the indicated direction.

But on the backward, preparatory motion, preliminary to the actual throw, the ball or orange is dropped into a body servante or the coin is hooked to the trousers leg.

Through suggestion and inducement, at the climax of the burned bill trick explained previously in this text, the spectator is forced to believe that the recovered bill has come from within a multiple-wrapped package. We know it has not. It never has been within the package. Actually, except for suggestion-powerful in this case in forcing an erroneous conclusion-the recovered bill has no connection with the package upon which so much attention has been concentrated.

In the Mulholland version of *The Spirit Bell*, the one that seems to ring at the command of the performer even when covered with an inverted tumbler, the spectator is forced to his conclusions through suggestion. Of course, the bell in question does not ring. A duplicate bell hidden upon the performer's person does the ringing. Very definitely, the sound comes from the

performer. But through suggestion and inducement the spectator is forced to believe that it comes from the covered bell standing silently some distance away.

In *The Arabian Bead Mystery* are the beads cut from the string and do they actually fall separately? Or is it suggestion? In *The Jumping Peg Trick* does the peg actually move, or is it suggestion? In *The Ball and Tube Trick* does the steel ball actually get smaller, or does the spectator react to suggestion?

Throughout the entire field of operative magic, constantly, to a greater or lesser degree, suggestion and inducement are employed by the skillful magician to force his desires. This forcing is accomplished, as pointed out before, casually, gently and indirectly, for the purpose of disarming the spectator, for the purpose of concealing and disguising this act of imposing the magician's will. In this manner, the performer may be certain of accomplishing his purpose because, to the spectator, it seems that the latter is yielding to his own desires, of his own volition.

What the spectator does voluntarily has an entirely different complexion, in deception, than what he is forced to do.

Its very definition indicates where and when it may be employed effectively.

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The second important division of deception artifices-the first being disguise in its various forms, as detailed-is control of the spectator s attention.

Disguise, of course, influences perception and discernment. Now, where disguise cannot be used effectively, it is necessary for the magician to prevent perception of things which might be significant. The way to do this is to interfere with what is perceived. This is done by taking the spectator's attention away from significant and perhaps revealing things.

Most magicians call it *misdirection*.

A search through the literature of magic fails to disclose anything close to what I believe to be satisfactory in the way of a definition of the term.

In an earlier pamphlet *MISDIRECTION FOR MAGICIANS*, I tried to define it. In that work I said, "The prefix *mis* means *wrong* or *wrongly*. The dictionary defines *direct* as to *determine the direction of; to point out a way to; to guide; to instruct*.

"We can, then, for our purpose, define *misdirection* as *the act of guiding wrongly, the act of wrongly pointing out the way*, or perhaps more properly, *the act of deliberately misguiding from cause to an erroneous effect, to serve an ulterior purpose*.

But I believe the term, *misdirection*, used, as it usually is, to refer to the act of controlling the attention of the spectator, is too narrow. Anything that misleads a person, by intention, is due to misdirection. It is caused by the performer purposefully directing the spectator down a wrong course and away from the right One. The act of misdirecting is the effective employment of disguise or attention control in order to deceive. It directs or leads the spectator away from the true solution.

From the broader interpretation, then. the entire contents of this work have to do with misdirection.

At the moment, however, we are specifically concerned with that portion of misdirection that has to do with the control of the spectator's attention. Anything that exercises dominance or rule over the spectator's attention may be said to control it.

The form of control may take several guises.

One method of exercising control over the attention of the spectator is to forestall it. Obviously, what the performer plans

to do must capture the attention of the spectator sooner or later. If eventual attention is anticipated, if the critical thing is done *before the spectator's attention is fixed upon it*, it will be impossible for that specific thing to catch the spectator's awareness. We might call this act, performed before the spectator's attention realizes its significance *anticipation*.

Another control over the attention of the spectator is to accomplish relaxation of the attention before the significant thing is done. In this case, the spectator is misled to believe that the performer has accomplished his objective. Since the deception has been accomplished. in the view of the spectator, vigilance is no longer required. The significant thing is done *after the attention has relaxed*. We could term this *premature consummation*.

Attention can be maintained only a limited length of time. The attention faculty becomes dulled after vigilance of some duration. Repetition of the same thing soon dulls the attention. Then, the repetitive act becomes monotonous, and the individual act is no longer attended with vigilant attention. This third method of attention control might be called *monotony*.

Fourth on this list might be termed *confusion*. In this case so many varied individual interests are presented for the spectator's observation that it is impossible for him, in the limited time available, to select the significant from the insignificant. In a desperate and hurried attempt to inspect and weigh the multiple interests presented, the spectator is able to give only superficial, hasty attention to the individual things before him. The result is that the attention is scattered over too much.

Extremely important and much the most subtle of all of these expedients is the fifth stratagem, *diversion*. This artifice turns the attention aside. It diverts attention from significant things by substitution of a new and stronger interest. The term *diversion* connotes a lack of attention at the proper point. It is at the critical point where the attention is turned from the proper course and lured away to a false course. This is accomplished through a new interest or a false interest disguised as the original one.

Distraction is the sixth artifice in attention control. In some respects is resembles diversion, but actually it is definitely different. Diversion entices or lures away the attention in such a manner that the change in course seems to the spectator to be voluntary. On the other hand, distraction forces the attention from the significant thing. Often it is violent. Distraction implies inability on the part of the spectator to think properly about anything. Contrast this with the seeming voluntary change in attention accomplished through diversion.

Specific direction, a bald, undisguised act of definite direction, supplies a seventh expedient for controlling attention. It is not the least bit subtle. Quite clearly it moves the attention openly from one place to another. Whether the specific direction is in the form of an act, a verbal direction or a gesture, it frankly tells the spectator to swing his attention to a specific place.

Let us see what these artifices look like in action.

When the performer comes out at the beginning of his act or program, loaded and ready for his opening production, he has anticipated the attention of his spectators. He has prepared and has performed his essential requirements before there was any audience attention upon him.

In *The Cards To the Pocket* trick, actually before the spectators are aware that the trick itself has begun, the first six cards are loaded into the pocket during the early stages, while apparently laying the preliminary groundwork. First, the magician counts the cards. This is one preliminary step before the actual presentation of the trick. Then the pocket is shown empty. This is another preliminary step. Still, the execution of the actual trick has not begun, so far as the spectators are concerned. But in this second preliminary step the performer has anticipated the attention of the audience. He has loaded the first group of cards in advance, before the audience has any idea as to what is to be done with the cards he has counted.

Another version of this trick, in which three cards are deposited in the pocket in advance of the trick, utilizes anticipation. It is impossible for the spectator to fasten his attention upon the loading of the first set of cards. This is because the loading was done prior to performance, out of sight of the audience.

When the magician, having apparently finished his trick, gives some indication to the audience that he has concluded, the

vigilance of the spectators relaxes. In this instant, with the actual conclusion still to come, the performer may make his final load. This is an example of premature consummation. With relaxed attention, the load may be made unnoticeably.

In Stephen Shepard's glass trick, later to be discussed in detail, a tumbler is vanished from beneath a paper cover that has been molded around it. As far as the spectators are concerned, apparently the vanish of the tumbler is the conclusion of the trick. Thus, the moves necessary to load the glass upon the person of the spectator-assistant are not followed with the alert attention that has attended the performer's doings prior to the vanish.

Performers of the past used to conclude their offerings, apparently, and bow deeply. During the bow, while the attention had relaxed, they would seize the handles of two telescopic *flag* staffs. Then, as they straightened up, they made a final production of the two staffs with large flags flying from them.

The comings and goings of the assistant in many magical performances soon become commonplace to the spectators. Attention finally relaxes on these, as they are happening constantly. The repetitious monotony of this action finally causes the spectator to ignore such happenings completely. Then, often the action is used by the performer as a means of accomplishing some secret objective, such as bringing on a needed load, or carrying away some significant property.

In the burned and restored banknote trick, discussed earlier, repetition of the same action, taking the various wrappings from the assisting spectator, was used to accustom the spectators to an insignificant action which later became significant and vital.

Often, anticipating the necessity of making a peculiar move sometime during the routine, a performer will accustom the spectators to the external appearance of the move by repeatedly doing it. Finally, it becomes an established and to the specific performer-a natural movement or position. As such, it has no special significance, *and it secures no special attention.* Later, when the particular action or position is necessary, it arouses no special interest and reveals no damaging clue as to the means of deception.

Card table performers use monotony constantly. For most card men, executing the second or bottom deal requires a special manner of holding the deck. So that the peculiar position will not attract special attention and telegraph when the sleight is being used, most card men make a special effort to hold the pack in the special position at all times, whether actually doing the sleight or not. Often, where both the second and bottom deals are being used, and where each has special requirements in position, a compromise is effected which allows one position to be maintained for all types of deals.

It has been mentioned here before that the use of the multiple wrappings in the burned bill trick make it difficult for the spectator to determine just when the bill is loaded. This is a definite application of confusion. At any stage in the trick, given the appropriate circumstances necessary, this loading action might take place. But the spectator is confronted with so many interests in this connection, and the development of the trick moves so fast, that proper attention at any place is virtually impossible.

In the same way, the conventional *Nest Of Boxes Trick* applies this principle of confusion. The number of boxes used governs the number of loading opportunities.

In the burned bill trick, the incident of the blank check is a confusing detail. While it is just a bit of by-play, as it is ultimately discovered during the course of the trick, at the time it happens there is nothing to indicate that the actions attendant upon it are not vital and significant.

The spectator is somewhat in the same dilemma as the colored lady who sat down on a buzz saw. It is difficult to determine specifically just which tooth "bit" her.

Magic is full of examples of the application of diversion. Since this stratagem entices attention away by substituting a new interest, anything that might catch interest might be employed. In everyday life this might be accomplished by the passing of an attractive girl, by seeing an appetizing dish or by coming upon a beautiful scene.

The movement of the performer's interest, apparently, from one place to another, is diversion. Using *The French Drop*, the ball, as discussed before, seems to be taken in the right hand. The performer's attention seems to follow the movement of this empty right hand, a hand simulating possession of the ball. The attention of the audience follows along. The judicious introduction of something in an attractive design, or in attractive color, will catch interest. Even the introduction of a new, interesting idea perhaps promising a possible solution of the method of deception, later to be exploded, will attract attention.

Distraction, which carries with it a strong suggestion of surprise, might be a sudden happening to something or someone apart from the performer. It may be a sudden sound or noise or movement such as a cry, a shot, a crash, or the sound of something falling. It must tend to force attention away from the previous interest, violently. The spectator response must be forceful, in a different direction. That it must startle the spectator does not follow necessarily It must compel, however. Temporarily, it rather makes the actions of the performer of secondary importance to some other interest.

The use of distraction by Thurston, in his performance of *The Triple Trunk Mystery*, may be remembered. A large rubber ball was shot from a cannon. It landed in the audience among the spectators. All attention, of course, followed it. Here was a missile, perhaps a cannon ball, perhaps accidentally, hurtling toward the audience. As the attention followed the ball, even as it stayed while the ball bounced from person to person, the girl, who had been loaded into the cannon, escaped from it and made her way backstage.

In another case a sudden shot is heard at the rear of the audience. All attention immediately swings toward the sound. The performer is seen running down the aisle, the performer, apparently, who a moment before was vanished upon the stage. Meanwhile, the assistant who substituted for the performer during the vanish, is escaping from the cabinet into which he had been placed.

In still another case, an assistant suddenly stops, stoops and picks something from the stage floor. During that moment attention is carried away from the performer, so that he may make a difficult movement or exchange, unseen. There have been performers who, like Imro Fox, seemed to stumble, following which, while he looked at the floor in surprise, the pass was executed. A sudden change in the direction of a movement, as from a horizontal path of action to a vertical one, in making a pass, is a distraction. So also is the case where the performer, or an assistant, seems to knock something from a table accidentally, as a covering for a move.

Little needs to be added to what has already been said in connection with specific direction. The performer may deliberately move the attention to another place, if *there seems to be a logical, unsuspicious reason for it*. Actually, there is nothing subtle about it, as has been emphasized before.

For example: A girl is vanished from atop a table, in a puff of smoke. Perhaps she has merely been covered temporarily with a blind that blends with the background. But the magician swings around to the opposite side, indicating a cabinet and saying, "Behold!" The outline of the girl is seen to be gradually appearing within the second cabinet. Meanwhile, the original girl has stepped quickly and quietly through a trap in the backdrop, and the masking blind has silently and swiftly returned whence it came. After the materialization of the second girl, the performer and his assistants industriously and thoroughly take apart the site of the original vanish, piece by piece.

Another performer, having vanished a ball, apparently plucks it from behind his knee. This ball, however, has been concealed in a small pocket in the performer's trousers leg. But the performer definitely and specifically directs the attention to the apparent recovery of the ball. And while the attention is upon the second ball, the original ball is surreptitiously deposited in another pocket.

During *The Multiplying Billiard Ball Trick*, the magician specifically directs attention upon the hand in which the second ball of the series is appearing. While he does this, and while the spectators are looking at the appearing ball, an additional ball is stolen from a secret supply hidden somewhere on the performer's person.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

In order to lay the foundation for logical approaches to applications of misdirection, it is necessary to study spectator attention. This, of course, must be aroused attention. In Chapter XVI of *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS,* the matter of interest was discussed at some length. Attention becomes aroused, as is generally admitted, when that which is presented to the spectator's attention appeals to his interests and instincts. The instinct factors, of course, are money, power, comfort, enjoyment, nourishment, sex, laughter, and the great many other stimuli that cause men to respond.

Misdirection begins with gaining the aroused attention of the spectator. As the spectator's attention upon the performer becomes more and more complete, his ability to concentrate upon more than one thing at a time becomes less and less.

So it is vitally essential that the deceptionist have the spectator's *complete, aroused attention.*

Probably it is because of this basic requirement of complete attention that it is so difficult to cause children to react to misdirection which would normally be effective with adults.

If the magician should succeed in securing the spectator's complete attention, and if he is successful in leading it away from a significant move, it is quite doubtful that the spectator would be able to observe, or detect, anything outside of the immediate location to which the performer has led his attention. It must be thoroughly understood, naturally, that the performer has caught the spectator's complete, aroused attention prior to the act of directing it.

Having led the spectator's attention away from the critical thing or action, the magician may do what is necessary in accomplishing the

deception, *providing the accomplishing act is not done in such a man*ner' *that the attention is brought back to the point of danger*. This is fundamental.

His purpose accomplished, the performer allows attention to return to the original point. This, of course, does not apply where the spectator's attention has been anticipated.

Among the things which will accomplish aroused attention is a circus parade. Here are such factors as bright color, action, movement, variety, noise, glamour-the very things discussed so thoroughly in *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS.* All of these excite interest. With the interest aroused, attention follows.

Having captured the attention, the performer's problem is to retain it and increase its intensity. Children are primarily sensitive to anything that excites the senses. Adults retain this sensitivity, but in addition they react to stimulation connected with previous experience and education and environment. Thus, if a person is interested in a hobby-magic, for example-any reference to magic, directly or indirectly, will gain his instant attention.

Whether this attention is retained depends upon several fundamental factors.

The personality of the performer is highly important. In addition, the personal demeanor-aside from personality-has much to do with it. The magician must seem interested himself. There must be animation, color, and entertainment. There must be some suspense. Actually, it must be realized, showmanship factors are the important ones here.

Note the parallel to the circus parade: Interest, suspense, animation, color, and other showmanship factors. These qualities must appear physically and mentally. For any purpose, a variety of these important ingredients, both mental and physical, must be present and recognizable

The quality of appearing to be interested, thus stimulating the interest of the spectators, is best accomplished, obviously, by being so. The performer must show interest in what he is doing, and in any assistant with whom he may be working. It shows in the freshness of his speech. His eyes reflect it. Every movement of his body-the hands, the feet, and the face-presents a different aspect to the spectators, if the performer is interested. No performer can hope to catch and retain interest if he himself does not feel it.

Suspense, naturally, is dependent upon the method of presentation. One performer may go through his tricks in a desultory manner, monotonously, colorlessly, not attempting to build up to his climaxes. Another brings out his points enticingly, seemingly with more interesting things to come. He invariably withholds a little, adding new interests, presenting new phases, as he proceeds. This causes the spectator to follow along eagerly.

The most obvious example of suspense is shown in the popular' pulp magazines devoted to hair-raising detective stories. Note that the reader is gripped right at the beginning. He is literally dragged into the stories by his ears. The hero plunges into trouble immediately. In his efforts to extricate himself from his dilemma, he gets into difficulties that seem more and more insurmountable. The reader is lured into the story because the hero captures his interest. Because he cannot readily solve the hero's difficulties, the reader continues the story to discover how the hero finally escapes.

In a magic act, suspense is achieved by attractive presentation that seems to promise newer surprises, newer interests, more and better entertainment. By apparently using ordinary objects with which the spectator is familiar, the performer increases the immediate interest. Because the spectator is familiar with what the objects seem to be, he realizes fully the difficulties confronting the magician. At first, the entertainer causes the spectator to speculate as to what the former will do with this object. Then, the spectator questions whether the magician can accomplish what he has set out to do. The next interest to the spectator might be whether the magician could perform the trick without detection.

Suspense comes from varied attack. It arises as the result of surprising the spectator with unexpected sallies, by tricks of expression, of the voice, of gesture, of action. Something is held back from the denouement. Individuality permeates the performance so that the spectator really does not know what next to expect.

Animation is achieved, of course, by speaking briskly. It comes from varying the tempo of the delivery, from varying the rhythm of the movements and actions. It comes from using the eyes, the hands, the face, the body. It is revealed in the original ways in which the performer may express himself, through constant variety in the ideas submitted for the spectator s consideration.

With complete attention, the magician's attention control will be effective. This assumes that the artifices selected have been planned and executed skillfully. Without complete attention, control of the spectator's attention is impossible.

If the performer desires to attract attention to his eyes and face, he gestures in that direction. This is not a act of deliberate pointing. Rather, it is a movement of the hand, perhaps, through a line of motion that will cause the spectator's eyes to follow, a movement made in the act of doing something. The magician will so time his movement that, when it is about to reach the limit of its travel, he will carry the attention along to his face by means of a remark. Simultaneously, this performer will actually catch and hold the eyes of an individual member of his audience.

This performer must be careful that he does not merely look as though he is looking at a spectator. Actually, he must be doing it.

Attention is attracted to the hands, first, by looking at them. He must actually see them. He focuses his eyes upon them. Then, he follows this with a movement of his hands. This also holds true for directing attention to any of his properties.

When the performer desires to divert attention away from himself, he uses his hands, his eyes, his voice.

But if there is anything that he does not want attention to fall upon, *he does not look at it. He does not move toward it. He does not move his hands toward it. He does not permit anyone to move towards it. Neither does he move it or allow it to be moved. Neither does he allow any inclination of the body, of the arms, or of the head-in any way-to direct attention toward it.*

If the magician desires to take attention away from something, he looks at it. He puts the object down. Then he moves his eyes, hands, arms, body-even his remarks, and of course his interest-away from it. If the object is his hand, he starts a line of attention to his face. Then he carries the attention away further with his eyes.

A skillful performer can move attention to and from an article or an object or an action just as he can move the object itself. It is all a matter of motion, direction and the performer's attention.

Such control of the attention certainly is unnecessary where the magician is in position to anticipate it. If he can accomplish what is essential, even something which might be significant, before the spectator's attention is centered upon what he is doing, there is no need to worry about the spectator's attention. Since the vital thing is accomplished, all the scrutiny in the world will not reveal anything.

Generally, long before the spectator is in any position to concentrate any attention upon it, in fact, most frequently in some secluded place, the magician prepares a considerable part of his performance in advance. Loads are concealed upon the body, upon servantes or within the hat. Flowers are loaded into cones or in mechanical arrangements that will bring them in sight when wanted. Rising card packs are strung, decks are arranged, and messages are written upon slates and covered with flaps. Cards are loaded in *The Television Frame*, or are placed in *The Card To Balloon* apparatus.

Just as the egg is loaded into the secret compartment of *The Egg Bag*, so are all preliminary preparations made in order to escape having significant things come to the attention of the spectator. This is true, whether you are tying the silks for *The Sympaihetic Silks* or helping the girl assistant get within the secret compartment of *The Doll's House*.

This matter of anticipating the attention of the spectator is much the same. The principal difference is that the preliminary preparation-where anticipation of attention, as a magician's expedient in deception psychology, is concerned-is done with a much shorter interval of time intervening between the preparation and the execution of the trick. Also, this anticipatory move is done out in the open, usually, in front of the audience-not in a secluded place, as in the first case.

An unmistakable example of anticipation is demonstrated in *The Cups and Balls Trick*. After showing the cups empty, and before the spectator is aware as to how the cups are to be used, or beneath which cup the ball is to be transposed, the cups are loaded by the performer. Even in the very act of revealing the presence of one ball beneath a cup, that very cup is being loaded with a second ball soon to be revealed. Practically throughout the entire routine, the performer is ahead of the progress of the trick, loading in advance. This continues until, as is the usual finish of the trick, the cups are lifted, one by one, to reveal a ball under each. And as the cups are lifted in what seems to be the concluding series of moves, they are passed to the opposite hand, which loads them one by one, loads them with onions, or lemons, or potatoes, or even baby chicks. The just-revealed ball is

picked up, the apparently empty cup being placed back on the table again, and the balls are placed in the pocket. When the three cups are turned over ultimately, the surprise punch load is revealed.

Anticipation is utilized by the performer who continues the trick, using now the baby chicks. The hand that conceals two chicks plunges into the clothing of the spectator. It brings forth one of these, leaving the other behind in anticipation of another production later.

This same stratagem, substantially, is used in producing cards, sausages, and other objects from the body of the spectator. Many performers go into the spectator's pockets with a large load, leaving behind a substantial supply for later production.

Anticipation is used in loading the first ball in *The Multiplying Billiard Balls Trick*, ordinarily. Often the first ball is stolen in advance of the actual starting of the trick, in anticipation.

Anticipation's use in connection with *The Cards To The Pocket* has been mentioned.

This principle of anticipation is employed in some of the sponge ball routines as a basic expedient. When the spectator is handed two sponge balls, pressed together as one, the deceptionist is employing anticipation. He is loading the ball to be transposed into the spectator's hand before the duplicate, which is to vanish and subsequently reappear in the spectator's hand, has been introduced. How can the spectator's attention become fixed upon something that does not exist to him at the time? Then, even after the first hall has been transported to his hand, there is no indication that the effect is to be repeated.

The performer, who pretends to look through the deck of cards to see if The Joker is present or to pick out the four Aces, using this pretense as a means of setting up the deck in a certain order, is using anticipation. Perhaps he might be separating the red cards from the blacks. Or he might be arranging them according to some pointer, system. Or he might be placing certain cards where he can get them when needed. Or he might be looking for a key card. In fact, there is no limit to the anticipatory preparation he might be making.

But in all cases, he is getting ready in advance doing something in anticipation of an effect to follow. Certainly, in this connection he is dissimulating also. He is making his move appear to be something dissimilar to what it really is. But primarily he is preparing in anticipation of the trick, before the spectator's attention is upon him *in connection with the trick for which the preparation is mad*e.

If, at the end of a card trick, the performer should palm off three cards and place them in his right trousers pocket, later to secure them to add to one packet of cards in *The Thirty Card Trick*, the performer is anticipating the latter trick. If he should take something from his coat pocket, perhaps the ring box in the burned bill trick discussed before, and place it in his trousers pocket preliminary to that trick, he is employing anticipation. Perhaps, prior to this, that specific pocket had been used for *The Cards To The Pocket* or *Any Card From The Pocket*. If, sometime during a prior trick, or before beginning the trick in question, the performer should casually secure possession of something vital to the following trick, he is employing anticipation. Perhaps he is obtaining a load from some hiding place and putting it in position for use in a subsequent trick.

Even the old trick known as *The Burning Cone* or *Fire and Water* employs anticipation. The modern version of this trick uses a special pitcher. But the original one, as I recall it, depended upon a celluloid insert that was rolled within the cornucopia. This celluloid insert was equipped with a hook. As the water was poured from the pitcher it went into the celluloid insert. Then, this insert was hooked upon the rear of the pitcher and extracted from the cornucopia as the pitcher was taken away and placed aside. Apparently, the trick had not actually been started. All that had been done was to prepare the preliminaries, as far as the spectators were concerned. Now that the magician held a cone filled with water, he was in position to begin the trick. Attention was upon him, and upon the cornucopia. But it was too late then. The magician had anticipated the spectator's attention by stealing the water, apparently before the trick was actually started.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

Kellar employed the principle of premature consummation in *The Flower Growth*. He utilized it with the revelation of the small sprout that appeared in the first flowerpot. As the routine was described earlier in this work, you will recall that the first production revealed was this small sprig. This seemed to the spectators to be the production. Consequently their attention relaxed, as far as the cone was concerned, and became centered upon the bush which seemed to be growing. When this relaxation took place, Kellar loaded the cone. This load was an anticipation load. It was made before the audience knew there was to be a second production.

Then, with the second production, the second load was made in anticipation of going back to the first pot. Both of these loads were made in advance of any indication that the cones were to be used again.

Greater skill is necessary in applying the idea of premature consummation in order to cause the spectators to relax their attention. This is because the magician has the spectator's attention. Something must be done to cause it to relax. There was no such condition, where anticipation was concerned. In the latter case, the attention had relaxed at the conclusion of the preceding trick, or else the thing done by the performer had no significance in connection with the trick being done then.

But now, using premature consummation, it is necessary to shake off attention. It is not easy.

The Vanishing Bird Cage, as presented by Stephen Shepard, supplies the best example of applied premature consummation that I can call to mind.

Mr. Shepard vanishes the cage in the usual manner, employing the arm pull. But his arm pull terminates at his wristwatch, strapped to his left wrist. By releasing a pin, the end of the cord opposite the cage is set free.

After the usual vanish, the cage having folded and having gone up the right sleeve, Mr. Shepard pretends to hear someone say that the cage has gone up the sleeve, as indeed they often actually do. Off comes his coat. It is thrown into the audience for inspection. Usually this is the cue for some wag in the audience to shout for the vest, too. If it is not actually called for, Mr. Shepard pretends to hear a demand to that effect. Off comes the vest. It follows the coat into the audience.

Certainly by this time someone will yell for the shirt, as well. Obligingly, the necktie is pulled from the collar and thrown into the audience. Rapidly unbuttoning his shirt, this is shrugged off. It, too, goes into the audience.

By this time there is no need to pretend to hear what the audience demands. No. By this time, without pretense, the spectators are clamoring for his trousers. This seems to be a bit embarrassing to Mr. Shepard. Really, he does not seem to have bargained for this. But the cries increase, of course. So Mr. Shepard continues to disrobe until nothing but his shorts, his shoes and his socks are between him and the most complete exposure ever seen in magic.

I almost overlooked telling you. The birdcage is not found—if anyone cares by this time.

But where does this example of premature consummation come in?

I mentioned that the arm pull could be released at the left wrist. In his club performances, Mr. Shepard carries his properties in a small traveling bag, from which he takes them as needed.

Immediately after the vanish of the cage—just as if the trick were finished—before the episode of disrobing, Mr. Shepard reaches into the bag and brings forth the properties for his next trick. But while he has been searching for these properties, both hands have been inside the bag. While his hands were covered, Mr. Shepard released the arm pull. Then, with his left hand he reached up his right sleeve, grasped the cage, and pulled both the cage and the pull cord from the sleeve. Now he is completely free of the cage and pull.

Then, turning back to the audience with the newly acquired properties in his hands—the time taken so far is negligible—Mr. Shepard pretends to hear the remark about the cage going up the sleeve.

During the relaxation, apparently at the conclusion of the trick, after the attention has become much less alert, the necessary things were done. This resulted in much greater deception than would have been possible were the trick to have been concluded in the conventional manner.

Thus, because the significant thing was done *after* the trick was apparently finished, or rather after the spectators prematurely believed it finished, it is a true example of applied premature consummation being used to escape the spectator's attention.

Another example of premature consummation applied occurs in *The Sympathetic Silks* where successive exchanges of the knots, from one group of silks to the other, are revealed. Many performers cause three of the silks to appear to be knotted together with a corner of each in a common knot. This is accomplished by snapping a small rubber band about these corners, as they are folded over together.

In applying this idea, usually one set of three silks, which apparently became knotted together in sympathy with another set of three, are later revealed to have separated themselves, also in sympathy, when the corresponding set is untied. As this second stage is demonstrated, the three silks which were openly tied are openly untied. One by one, the silks of the sympathetic set are picked up and placed in the opposite hand—just as if this were the conclusion of the trick. But, when these three silks are together the rubber band is slipped over them, as the performer bows, apparently concluding the trick. Casually, he places the silks down. Notice that the necessary move is made after the apparent finish. Then, as if it is an afterthought, the performer suggests to his assisting spectator that he might try tying his silks together, a corner of each silk being tied, as a group, in a single knot. Of course, this is the appearance of the sympathetic set that is held together with the rubber band.

Again, the trick seems to be concluded. The performer bows, slipping the rubber band from his set as he does so. The set is placed aside again. Subsequently, the spectator is asked to untie his three, and the sympathetic set is shown to have become separated as well.

This time the performer takes all six silks in his hands and bows in conclusion. But as he does so, holding one corner of each silk in the same hand, the six corners are folded over again. And again a rubber band is slipped over them.

Straightening up, the silks are tossed into the air. They fall, having apparently knotted themselves together while in the air.

Practically the entire last portion of this routine is accomplished by applying the principle of premature consummation to secure relaxation of the spectators' attention.

It has been emphasized in this work that the best way to secure attention and interest is for the performer actually to be attentive and interested himself. This is sound psychology. Its opposite is equally sound psychology. The best way to cause attention to relax is for the performer actually to relax his attention himself. This is a powerful assistance in premature consummation. It aids in no small degree.

In applying anticipation, for the same reason, the performer should avoid any evidence of interest or attention in connection with what he does.

The performer *must* personally participate in the trick in the same way that he desires the spectator to react. Careless beginners may ignore this point. Skillful experts invariably observe it with great care. Just because a point seems abstract and intangible, it cannot be eliminated in effective deception. Deception itself is mostly psychological. The most powerful weapons at the disposal of the deceptionist are his psychological weapons. They are much more potent than the concrete things the magician uses.

To break a hard thing, like a piece of stone, one must use a hard thing, like a hammer. To control an electric current, that which has mastery over that force must be employed. Thoughts and the reactions of the mind constitute a force. But one cannot control this thought force with a hammer. Use it as one might, even though the person involved might seem to have changed his thought, the thought itself is not changed. Neither can one harness this thought force with that which would insulate an electric current. Nothing material will touch it. No material restraint will hold it. No physical force will master it.

The only thing that can touch this thought force is another thought force. A thought may be moved and influenced only by another thought. Psychological problems can be solved only through psychology.

Therefore, since effective deception is possible only by deceiving the understanding, and since the understanding results from the responses to thought stimuli, we can control the understanding only by controlling thought. That which has to do with thought and its control, which has to do with the thought process of the mind, is psychology.

From the material viewpoint, things psychological are completely abstract. From the mental viewpoint, things psychological are completely concrete. The deceptionist must deal with those things that are concrete to the mind. If he does not, if—instead—he deals with those things that are concrete to the material, he will fail to deceive.

Many will say, "No." But if a person wishes to accomplish something in a strange land, he uses the language of that land. In France, he would use French. In Spain, he would use Spanish. In the realm of the mind, one must use the language of the mind.

We have discussed how the deceptionist may act before the spectator has an opportunity to apply his attention to what he does. We have also discussed how the performer may disarm the spectator's attention by seeming to come to a conclusion. Now our problem is to dull the sharpness of the spectator s attention. We do this, as was pointed out before, by creating monotony through repetition.

There is danger of misconstruing monotony as the confusion stratagem. In many respects they are similar. Both involve multiple details. But in the case of an application of the monotony expedient, all of the details are identical. The effectiveness of the artifice vitally depends upon this tiresome sameness.

On the other hand, the effectiveness of the confusion stratagem depends upon multiplicity of details. The individual elements need not be the same. In fact, variety is desirable. The very essence of confusion is disarray, turmoil and disorder. These need not be physical. As a psychological weapon, the disarray, turmoil and disorder are mental. This prevents logical deduction. It hides the significance of operative details. So confusion, to be created effectively, necessitates many and dissimilar

things.

In an appended section to *MISDIRECTION FOR MAGICIANS*, Leslie P. Guest contributed an excellent paper called *Misdirection—Open and Covered*. In it he described one of the best examples of the application of monotony that magic has ever seen.

Slightly reedited, Mr. Guest's description follows:

Let us consider Thurston's Spirit Cabinet and The Floating Ball:

As the lights dim to black art consistency, George White boldly walks from the wings carrying the floating ball in a black case. He deliberately deposits this package within the cabinet, then walks off on the other side of the stage, trailing the necessary threads behind him. Not one spectator in a thousand is even aware of his presence. I call this the limit of open misdirection. It is effective because nobody knows what is to happen next, nor what the black parcel is for, also because all attention is riveted on Thurston and his dramatic patter.

Mr. White's presence upon the stage, of course, went unnoticed in this case because he had been carrying things on and off throughout the performance. His goings and comings had become so frequent and common, since nothing of particular interest to the audience had happened in connection with him, that the spectators no longer paid any attention to him. If they saw him, they ignored him. To the spectators his presence had no significance whatever.

This point is emphasized as Mr. Guest continues:

For a more glaring example, take the ending of the same illusion. The floating ball has retired to the cabinet. Thurston exclaims. "Let's try to catch the ghost." At this cue, several assistants rush on stage and proceed to knock the cabinet apart. During the excitement George White strolls out, picks the floating ball out of the cabinet and walks off with it—the large black package being in full sight… This time a series of conspicuous actions conceal the one small theft.

The point is emphasized, as I indicated before, in the above paragraph. The distinction between monotony and confusion is clearly illustrated. When Mr. White first brought on the ball, he was ignored. When he took it off, be was just one of many details, without any particular significance. In the latter case, this was an application of the principle of confusion. The former act was an application of the principle of monotony.

In *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS* on page 124 is described my routine for *The Ball and Tube Trick*. It is emphasized that stealing the outer tube requires a peculiar position of the thumb and forefinger. Stealing this outer tube also requires an upward sweeping movement of the hand. Both the hand position and the peculiar gesture would be suspicious and significant, if done only at the time the outer tube is stolen.

So the principle of monotony is employed to cover it. The repetition is accomplished by doing the sweeping gesture again and again, during the course of the trick. The same peculiar upward sweep is used as that necessary when the tube is stolen. In the guise of passing the hand in front of the tube and ball again and again, the spectators become accustomed to this gesture. And they also become accustomed to the peculiar position of the hand, this position being used constantly, as well. Soon the position and the gesture become repetitive. They become monotonous. They lose attention. Then, when they are actually necessary, when they are definitely used to accomplish a vital part of the deception, they are unnoticed and have no significance.

Whenever a peculiar position of the hands is necessary, the spectators may be accustomed to it by repetition.—This has already been mentioned in connection with dealing seconds and bottoms.—But it holds true, as well, of the closed-finger position of the hand in holding a palmed card. Or of a special posture necessary for some purpose. Or of a special gesture, as illustrated, necessary to accomplish some end.

It is equally true, as in the Thurston illustration, where an assistant must contribute a vital part. Repetition of a special position necessary for stealing a billiard ball, an egg or some similar object will cause this special position to lose significance, if

repeated often enough before the position is actually necessary.

We had an excellent illustration of the power of confusion in the finale of *The International Magicians* show. This is fully described in the first book of this series. Substantially, it was made up of many magicians performing many tricks simultaneously. There were several individual tricks in that finale which in themselves were worthy of special attention. At various times individual magicians, who had seen the show before, told me that they had endeavored to concentrate upon one of the tricks, having had a special interest in it. Invariably they failed to follow it. One chap even went so far as to roll up his program in a tube. Using it like a telescope, he centered it upon a particular bowl trick that attracted him. Before he realized it, he had lost the bowl trick, having been distracted by the action and color around it.

Any complex series of handlings brings confusion. This is a standby with some of our best card men. Even experts, having selected a card and having returned it to the pack, soon become confused and lost in multiple shuffles, multiple piles and multiple cuts. In the beginning, they might be able to follow the position of the card. But soon an avalanche of details buries them in confusion.

As a matter of fact, possibly the bulk of the identification tricks with cards rely upon the inability of the spectator to follow confusing details.

Many of the most effective expedients in *The Linking Rings* are possible because the spectator, confused by the number of apparently similar rings, loses the identity of individual rings he has examined or is watching. Due to this confusion, separate counts are possible, switches are possible. The very disorder runs interference for effects that may be accomplished only by sheer audacity.

The familiar throw-away pellet trick owes some of its ability to deceive to the confusion created in the mind of the spectator. This is true, also, of the sleight-of-hand coin trick where the coins pass, one by one, from one hand to the other. Much of the effectiveness *of The Chinese Coin Trick*, the one where the coins change color, one version of which is explained in *THE TARBELL COURSE*, titled *The Chameleon Poker Chips* is created by confusion.

Marked cards are difficult to detect because of the confused design on the back of most cards. The tiny indications are discovered by the performer readily only because he knows where to look and what to look for.

In the early days of the circus, many a ticket seller added many an illicit dollar to his grouch—bag simply because he was adept at applying confusion in counting out the change to the hapless yokel.

Blackstone employs confusion in the transposition illusion that he calls *The Teddy Bear*. Several characters are involved in this trick, which goes off into several different tangents, until it is difficult for the spectator to keep straight in his mind as to who is who. These characters are attired in various disguises and at the denouement practically everything, except the theater and the town in which he is playing, has changed—and at times, I am sure, some of the spectators are not even certain of the latter two.

I do think it should be emphasized, in using this expedient of confusion, that the stratagem loses effectiveness if the spectator realizes he is confused.

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CHAPTER TWENTY

On page 37 of *THE TRICK BRAIN* was explained a scissors production based upon a Lloyd Enochs variation of a wine glass production invented by Jardine Ellis. The original trick appears in *A FEW JARDINE ELLIS' SECRETS*, by George Johnson, under the title of *Thimble and Wine Glass*. I have long considered the Enochs variation an outstanding example of effective diversion.

A small stem type wineglass is filled with water, or other suitable liquid, and covered with a rubber cover. Thus prepared, it is inverted and hung on a wire clip at the left edge of the lower vest pocket, just above the left trousers pocket.

Both sides of a borrowed handkerchief are shown, the handkerchief being held by two adjacent corners and allowed to hang flat. The performer's right hand releases its hold upon the handkerchief. It falls, hanging from one corner, held with the fingers of the left hand. This hand is held breast high. The magician looks down at his right vest pocket, as he feels around in it with the fingers of his left hand. He says, "I thought I had a half dollar here."

Smiling, he looks up quickly. He looks up quickly right into the eyes of a spectator-assistant, if he uses one. Or, if not, he looks into the eyes of a member of the audience. "I wonder if I could borrow a coin from you?" As he catches the spectator's attention—the eyes of the other spectators will be upon the performer's also—the magician reaches to the left, straight across his body. He reaches with his right hand. This hand goes straight across the body, behind the handkerchief and beneath the coat. It slips the wineglass from the clip, the stem going between the second and third fingers. What, in normal position would be the top of the glass' base, rests upon the outstretched fingers. Thus, the base of the glass rests upon the palm of the right hand.

This is done in one smooth motion. It is done while the performer is looking at the spectator. The hand sweeps over, takes the glass, goes up to the left fingers, and takes the handkerchief. The handkerchief, of course, is taken from behind. It hides the glass hanging below the fingers.

The performer looks down at his left vest pocket as the fingers of that hand feel around in it. At the same time the magician says, "Never mind. If I don't have one here, I can get along without it."

In the meantime, the right hand holds the handkerchief, palm inclined toward the audience, glass hanging inverted below the hand and behind the handkerchief.

The search in the left pocket having failed, the magician seizes the corner of the handkerchief nearest his body. He pulls

the handkerchief back over his right wrist until the center of it is over the palm. The opposite corner is hanging directly in front of the hand.

With the forefinger and thumb of the left hand, the performer plucks the center of the handkerchief. He lifts the center up a few inches, then allows it to fall back onto the palm. This is repeated.

The third time he picks up the handkerchief thus, he closes his right hand, still held palm up. This is done beneath the cover of the handkerchief. The act of closing the hand brings the glass upright on the palm. The handkerchief is allowed to fall upon the glass thus materialized, as the right fingers, releasing the glass, straighten out again. The rubber cover is pinched through the handkerchief. It is removed from the glass, concealed beneath the handkerchief, as the latter is lifted off to reveal the glass.

Of course, the example of diversion occurs at the time the glass is stolen from the clip.

The problem was to gain possession of the glass in an unsuspicious manner. Securing it under the guise of moving the handkerchief from one hand to the other required a good reason for the move. A good alternative reason for making the required motion was needed. A natural and plausible excuse was the necessity of freeing the left hand so that it could search the left vest pocket. This was a good excuse because, doing this, the hands would be held rather high naturally.

But it was necessary that the performer's interpretation of the move should prevail. A different interpretation could reveal the act as one of taking something from concealment. This would have damaged the deception irreparably. So the performer had to insure that the spectators would mistake the move for one of searching for a coin. He could not say, "I am doing this so that I can search for a coin"

Direct statements run risks of being disbelieved, when the spectators know that deception is imminent. Suggestion is much more powerful, as was discussed previously. Therefore, the performer had to plant the idea. He established what he was doing by searching the right pocket first. So, when the handkerchief was exchanged to the other hand, the act was natural and reasonable for a purpose the audience knew.

Even though the act was natural, however, the act was not sufficiently strong in dissimulation, if the spectators' attention followed it closely. It became necessary, then, to divert the attention away from the act.

The performer fixed the spectators' attention upon the right vest pocket. This insured that the spectators would know what he was doing—this, and his remark relative to borrowing a coin. As he took his right hand from this pocket, it moved upward, toward his face, at a slow, easily-followed speed. When the hand stopped, the bowed head—in that position because it was looking at the pocket picked up the movement, and lifted. The head lifted to look at the spectator while the remark was addressed to him.

It was a slow, uninterrupted flow of motion, carefully timed, from the right vest pocket to the performer's eyes.

His eyes held the spectator's eyes momentarily, while he asked for the coin. This caught—and held—the spectator's attention. In that split second the glass was stolen.

In passing, it might be well to note also that the performer added to the deception by utilizing anticipation. The glass was stolen before the trick seemed to have begun.

Diversion is the subtlest of all of the stratagems at the disposal of the deceptionist. It is the introduction of a new interest for the spectator at a critical moment for the performer. Almost anything may be used. It may be a person, an object, an idea, a happening, or even a gesture. There is no limit as to what may be used, so long as it will draw the spectator's attention in a subtle manner. Naturalness, lack of suspicious motive and seeming utter absence of preplanning seem to be the essential ingredients.

One may address a remark, or a joke, to an assistant Or a spectator, to divert attention from the critical operation while

making the pass. He may address a spectator so as to divert the latter's attention during the act of palming off cards in performing *The Cards To The Pocket*. Another instance is rubbing the hand on the elbow, apparently rubbing the coin into it, while the other hand is secretly dropping the coin into a pocket. A sudden question will catch attention.

The fundamental secret of diversion is a natural, gradual approach, quietly done, which catches the spectator off guard. In contrast, distraction is created by surprise and unexpectedness coupled with natural unsuspicious reasons for them.

Diversion has been used effectively to assist the deception in the production of a stack of bowls. The performer has produced a quantity of silks from a hat or from some other production device. He starts over toward a nearby chair to put them down. But just as be arrives at the chair, a solitary silk flutters from his left hand to the floor.

As the performer stoops to pick up the silk, the right hand, holding a number of the silks, rests upon the back of the chair, apparently supporting him. The spectators' attention will follow the movement of the silk, normally. While all eyes are on the silk, the right hand seizes the stack of bowls that has been resting concealed behind the chair.

Having retrieved the silk, the performer straightens. His right hand holds the silks lightly, just as if the added weight of the bowls was not there. This calls for dissimulation. It is necessary to prevent betrayal of the presence of the heavy stack of bowls.

The performer adds the silk to those in his right hand, stepping away from the chair as he does so. Then, the silks are lowered to the floor and the stack of bowls is revealed.

A similar type of diversion may be used for loading a hat or a cone. Here, during the production of articles from a hat—or during the production of flowers—one of the produced articles drops to the floor, seemingly by accident. The performer stoops to pick it up with the left hand. As he does so, the hat or cone scoops an added load from the back of a chair.

Robert Madison, an unusually skillful amateur, is one of the finest masters of misdirection I have ever known. He used to apply a clever application of diversion in his egg bag routine. To secure a live chicken load, he had a table that would eject the chicken from the front. All that was necessary was to hold the egg bag with its mouth against the front of the table. The hand holding the bag could do the loading.

But holding an egg bag with its opening against the front of a table would be a highly suspicious action normally. The problem was to find a reason for holding it in that position, a position that would be normal and natural for the special circumstances necessary.

Mr. Madison accomplished it by vanishing the egg and reproducing it from the sole of his shoe. The egg was apparently taken from the sole of the right shoe. To get at it, it was necessary for him to stand on one foot. Accordingly, he rested his right hand, which was also holding the egg bag, upon the front of the table. This brought the bag in the proper position. The right foot was lifted and crossed in front of the left leg. In this position, the left hand took the egg, apparently, from beneath the shoe.

But during this action, while attention was upon the egg being recovered from beneath the shoe, the live chicken was loaded into the bag. Its subsequent production was a complete surprise.

In the paper from *MISDIRECTION FOR MAGICIANS*, referred to before, Leslie Guest explained an excellent example of diversion in connection with a rabbit load:

Let me illustrate with a practical problem of my own. I produced silks from a crush opera hat, followed by a large rabbit. Originally, I would drop one of the silks, and in stooping to recover it would scoop the rabbit from a chair servante into the hat. Later I got away from the chair and had Mrs. Guest plop the rabbit into the hat at the psychological moment. We were not well satisfied with the subterfuge. We often felt like ostriches concealing their heads in the sand while their bodies were quite apparent.

Our solution was this: The last silk produced was *actually a variegated parachute. This I tossed high in the air. As I tossed, my other hand, holding the hat, moved back and in this instant Mrs. Guest plopped the rabbit into the hat. All eyes followed the slowly descending parachute. We feel that this open movement is now well covered.*

A further idea from Mr. Guest definitely contributes to our exploration of diversion. It, too, appeared in the paper in question.

I have an excellent piece of equipment listed by Thayer as "The Flight of the Rodents." It is a variation of an old Dutch vanish on a smaller scale. The vanish is effected by inserting the livestock into a beveled tabletop with rubber panels top and bottom. This is perfect for small animals, but I tried it with a large rabbit. The result was a quite-evident bulge on both sides of the tabletop. Something had to be done.

The actual procedure was this: The rabbit is placed in the box. The box is taken apart, and each piece is shown on both sides. Mrs. Guest takes each piece as I show it. Then the tabletop is lifted and shown. Mrs. Guest also takes it. Finally, there is sucker business with the skeleton table frame and legs, and they are eventually shown for what they are.

We made one small addition and our problem was solved. The lifting of the tabletop from the frame automatically releases a rabbit's foot that swings into view at the bottom of the table frame. This instantly draws attention, and usually a howl from the audience. While the howl is still going strong, that dangerously bulgy tabletop is quickly shown and passed off. And by the time the rabbit's foot is shown for what it is, and the skeleton table frame tipped forward, all damaging evidence has long since left the stage.

If one should be attending a banquet, and if, during one of the speeches—BANG!—someone fired a revolver, it would get immediate and complete attention. It is quite possible that, at that moment, the waiters could walk off with the piano without anyone noticing it.

This is distraction.

Now, suppose that, instead of attending a banquet, the performer should be about to make the pass. If the drummer, at that particular moment, should fire the revolver, the performer could make the pass—and very clumsily, too—without being seen.

Suppose, instead, a card has been selected, and that the performer is ready to make the pass. He takes the pack as usual, and steps back a pace. But as he steps back, his foot slips and he looks down quickly to see what he has stepped on. Right after the slip, just as he looks down, he makes the pass.

Instead of slipping, he could suddenly look down at the floor and brush an imaginary something aside with the toe of his shoe. As he brushes the floor, he makes the pass. The spectators' eyes cannot fail to follow the magician's.

These little actions, done naturally and not obviously, are the unexpected and distracting happenings that take the place of the revolver shot. But these expedients will not be effective if they do not really look to be accidental, if it is apparent that they are deliberately contrived.

Going back to the banquet: Perhaps, like myself, you were enjoying the food. Suppose that, after that first shot, someone should undertake to fire the gun at regular intervals, repeatedly. The noise would soon lose its attention value and become a nuisance.

Soon, the repetition would become monotonous—just as monotony was created, as previously discussed, to dull the spectators attention.

The same holds true of all of these expedients and artifices. One cannot repeatedly use the same sort of attention control stratagems. Neither may they be done in the same manner. The very basis of deception is many and varied applications of many

and varied expedients.

Thus, if distraction is caused by one method, in one trick, the same thing should not be used for another trick. The same holds true in applying all of these elements of attention control. The attack must be varied.

The Reappearing Alarm Clock, ringing loudly, is excellent distraction to cover getting rid of the tray used in *The Vanishing Alarm Clock*.

Blackstone uses a bold application of distraction in making an exchange with an assistant. Both are in costume, disguised. During the attempted shooting of a gun, which does not explode, and while a box is being exhibited empty by his assistants, on the opposite side of the stage, Blackstone backs off behind a wing. His assistant, similarly attired, steps right out again, in his place.

In another instance, there is a low stool on one side of the stage. The girl assistant steps onto it. The performer steps upon the stool, behind her. He spreads a sheet in front of her. Just as he covers the girl, holding the sheet stretched out flat, an assistant enters from the opposite side of the stage. The assistant gets part way on. He stops. His eyes are on the floor, surprised. He stoops and picks up something.

The sheet has been spread so that one edge comes within a couple of feet of a wing. Just as the assistant, at whom the performer directs his own surprised attention, picks up what is on the floor, the girl steps off the stool and back of the wing. Then the performer picks up the action again and performs the apparent vanish.

In an illusion I used to perform, I signaled my reappearance at the rear of the audience by firing a revolver shot. The shot distracted attention from *The Tip-over Trunk* with which we accomplished the vanish which immediately preceded my reappearance. The double, made up to duplicate my appearance in costume, actually was vanished. With the shot, he stepped from the back of the trunk into a nearby cabinet. He did this in full view. He could do it because all attention had been distracted to the rear.

Psychologically, movement follows along a general line, either in a straight path or along a gradual curve.

Suppose a card is selected and replaced. The spectator is standing at the performer's right. The pack is in the magician's left hand. Opening the pack with his left thumb, the performer reaches across his body, to his right. and holds the opened pack for the spectator to replace the card. The card having been replaced, the pack is moved back across the body. The spectator's eyes follow the pack. But when the hand has reached the performer's left side, the performer suddenly elevates it a foot or more without stopping the movement. The spectator's eyes have a tendency, momentarily, to follow along the path of the original movement. The pass is made by the magician during the upward movement.

It is impossible for the spectator to see the move made. But it would be crude and unnatural to do it in this way. Yet, it could be made to look natural if the performer seemed to be lifting the hand to pull up his sleeve, or if he lifted the pack so that the spectators in the back might see.

This principle of movement, of sudden change in direction, actually is distraction. It may be applied in many situations. Many performers of the vanishing bird cage trick utilize it, either consciously or subconsciously. There must be, as has been emphasized repeatedly, a natural reason for it. Otherwise, it will merely confuse, not deceive.

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We might see what these stratagems and artifices look like in action, now that we may recognize them for what they arc. And for this purpose I can think of no better trick than Stephen Shepard's glass trick. Usually it follows his vanishing bird cage routine, discussed previously.

A sheet of newspaper is molded about a tall iced-tea glass that has been inverted. A chair is placed upon a table and the paper-covered glass is positioned, mouth down, upon the seat.

Mr. Shepard stands behind the table and a spectator stands beside him at his left. Banging the glass down upon the chair repeatedly, Mr. Shepard explains that he intends to extract the coins from the spectator's pockets. Slamming his hand down heavily upon the glass again and again, the performer cautions that the glass must be handled carefully. Not only does he intend to extract the coins from the spectator's pockets, the magician continues, but he also intends to cause them to appear beneath the glass.

The spectator is asked to place his hand upon the bottom of the glass, firmly. Then Mr. Shepard makes passes in the direction of the spectator's pockets, alternately slapping the spectator's hand down upon the glass—the slaps being solid whacks.

Suddenly the magician announces that the coins have passed. He asks the spectator to remove his hand from the glass. Mr. Shepard picks up the glass and looks. The spectator—and the remainder of the audience as well—can see that the coins are not beneath the glass.

Mr. Shepard replaces the glass and asks the spectator to place his hand upon the glass again. Just as the spectator's hand is about to touch the glass, Mr. Shepard hits the spectator's hand a smart blow, knocking the paper flat upon the chair seat. The glass is gone! Then Mr. Shepard extracts the glass from the spectator's inside coat pocket.

I have always felt that this particular trick is one of the truly great masterpieces of misdirection. There is not a piece of apparatus of any kind involved. All that is necessary is the glass, the newspaper, the spectator and skillful and dexterous application of psychological deception.

In the first place, the true denouement of the trick is completely concealed. The spectators are watching for a move in connection with the coins. This is excellent diversion of attention.

The glass seems to be incidental and little attention is paid to it. But Mr. Shepard builds up its solidity and its presence by suggestion. He bangs the glass upon the chair heavily. He vigorously slaps the spectator s hand upon it repeatedly. After the passes toward the pockets, when the covered glass is lifted, all attention is away from the glass. It is upon the area which the glass has covered because the coins are expected to be there. Again, this is excellent attention diversion from the glass.

In this instant, holding the mouth of the glass toward his body, Mr. Shepard extracts it boldly—in plain view—with a single deft tossing movement of the right hand. Partly masked by the spectator's right shoulder, the glass is tossed from beneath its newspaper cover to the left hand. After catching the glass, this hand travels smoothly to a point behind the spectator's right shoulder where it appears to rest. The paper, of course, retains the shape of the glass.

Not all magicians have the poise, the experience, the skill and the showmanship to execute this trick successfully. But in Mr. Shepard's hands it is sensational.

Robert Madison fans a pack of cards in front of a friend. Smiling guilelessly, he says softly, "Take a card."

The spectator takes a card and, naturally, looks at it. Mr. Madison looks crestfallen. "Oh, I didn't want you to look at it."

Of course, the spectator looks up at him quickly, not having intended to spoil the trick. But Mr. Madison takes the card from his fingers and says, "We'll put this one on the table." He does so.

The spectator selects another card. As he does so a glimmer of suspicion steals into the mind of any magician who may be witnessing the incident. It is the old, old story. The second card selected is the one originally selected and noted. But it is so well done!

Mr. Madison uses just two hands, a pack of cards and the something else we have been investigating. It is all done with such ease, such utter absence of haste or anxiety, such absence of any sign of guile, that the spectator is completely disarmed—disarmed by the softness of the voice, by the complete naturalness of every movement.

To begin with, the spectator did not expect Mr. Madison to do anything tricky. Mr. Madison's every movement conveyed just the opposite. There was nothing in the movement of his hands to suggest skill. There was nothing in what he said to cause suspicion. His soft voice and his unhurried, confident manner rather implied artlessness and entire lack of deceit. He was calm, unexcited, unhurried, sociable, poised.

The spectator took the card. With the same calm, unruffled bearing, and in the same natural, quiet voice, holding the spectator s attention, Mr. Madison said, as he would if a mistake had really been made, "Oh, I didn't want you to look at it!"

Then things happened. In far less time than it takes to tell it, the critical part was over. As he said, "Oh," his eyes went to the spectator's. He took the card from the spectator's fingers and nudged the spectator's chest, with the same hand. He caught the spectator's eyes and held them as he finished the sentence. This hand moved right back to the pack and top—changed the card unhurriedly—about on the word "take"—as he finished the sentence. Then he held this hand still, holding the substituted card. Finally, he looked down at it uncertainly, as if wondering what to do with it. He reached over and dropped it upon the table.

The remainder is obvious.

The secret is simply naturalness, a disarming attitude, and unhurried, confident movements—plus superb poise. It appeared to be extemporaneous. But it was anything but that. Every movement was carefully planned, painstakingly executed with skill and craft.

Let us examine that old masterpiece *The Cards To The Pocket*. But let us examine it as I recall seeing Tommy Martin perform it some ten or twelve years ago. Mr. Martin's own version, published in *THE SPHINX*, December 1942, is somewhat different.

A packet of cards is picked up and counted as eleven, one more being taken from the pack with the words, "Let's make it an even dozen." The right trousers pocket is shown empty except for a single silver dollar that the performer replaces carefully after the pocket is turned inside out and tucked back in.

While the cards are held in plain view in the left hand, one card passes to the empty pocket. It is taken out. Then a second card passes. It, too, is taken out. The cards in the left hand are carefully counted. There are found to be ten.

When the third card is passed, the magician asks a nearby spectator to take it out of his—the performer's—pocket. But as the spectator withdraws the card the performer plunges his own hand into his pocket anxiously, asking, "You didn't take my dollar, did you?" He is relieved to find the dollar still there. This time he prudently puts it in his vest pocket.

He asks the spectator if he felt any other cards in the pocket, and upon receiving a negative answer, two are passed at the same time. They are shown, and the left hand is now found to be holding seven.

One more is passed and taken from the pocket. The packet in the left hand is counted. There are six.

The trousers pocket is shown empty again. The magician says. "I'll pass two cards." But when he reaches in his pocket, they have not arrived. The pocket is turned inside out, then tucked back into the trousers. "They didn't arrive" The performer feels around on his chest and shoulder. He reaches beneath his coat and brings out the missing pair. Immediately they are replaced on the shoulder. He pats the shoulder. They pass into the trousers pocket. from which they are taken.

One more card is passed. It is taken from the pocket without incident. The cards in the left hand are counted. There are now three.

Another is passed, but the magician winces, says, "I know that's a Spade. I can feel it digging in." He removes the Ace of Spades from beneath his vest, at the right side.

Two are shown to remain in the left hand. One passes. Then the other. He takes one from his pocket, "Here's number eleven." He brings forth the other, "And number twelve." He reaches into his vest pocket and brings forth the dollar. "And I still have my dollar."

Substantially, this is the way Mr. Martin's routine appeared to me, with the exception of the conclusion. As pointed out before. Mr. Martin's routine as published varies from this in several details. It is exceptionally effective.

This is the way I worked it out:

Three cards are rolled up and planted in the top of the right trousers pocket. A Spade is clipped beneath the lower edge of the vest, on the right side. Two indifferent cards are placed in the upper left vest pocket, backs out. A silver dollar is put in the right trousers pocket.

Light cards are picked up and counted as eleven. One more is taken from the pack with the remark. "We'll make it an even dozen." The planted cards are pushed to the top of the trousers pocket. The pocket is turned inside out and shown. The dollar is mentioned at this time, and it is returned when the pocket is tucked back in again.

Two cards are apparently passed to the pocket singly, being taken from the three planted there. The pack is false-counted as ten. When the third card is passed, the pack is counted before allowing the spectator to reach into the pocket. This is to permit the performer to palm off three more cards as the spectator takes out the third card.

With the three palmed cards, the performer's right hand plunges into the pocket. It leaves the cards and brings out the dollar. "You didn't take my dollar, did you?" The dollar is placed in the vest pocket.

Two more cards are apparently passed together. They are taken from those just palmed into the pocket. The pack is false-counted as seven.

One more is passed and taken from the pocket. Then the six cards in the hand are correctly counted, their faces being toward the audience.

While the performer is squaring up these six cards, three of them are palmed off. The right hand goes into the pocket, deposits the cards and pushes them to the top of the pocket, and the pocket itself is turned inside out again. After it is tucked back in, the performer states he will pass two cards at once. But when his hand goes to the trousers pocket he pretends there are no cards there. Pushing the cards to the top of the pocket again, he turns the pocket out, then tucks it back in.

Feeling about his chest and shoulder, he apparently finds the cards stuck. He reaches under his coat, taking the cards from the upper vest pocket, and continues his hand on up to the shoulder, from which place he apparently brings out the cards. They are held backs toward the audience. Immediately they are apparently returned to the shoulder really being replaced in the upper vest pocket. The performer slaps his shoulder. Then he takes out two from the trousers pocket.

One more is passed and taken from the pocket. The cards in the hand are correctly counted as three.

When the tenth card is apparently passed, the performer pretends to feel it digging into his ribs. He turns his left side away from the audience to show the Spade being taken from beneath the vest. But one of the cards in the left hand is thumbed into the left coat pocket.

There are now two cards in the left hand. They are shown as such. But while they are being held up, and while attention is swung to the card in the left hand held toward the left side the performer holds the other card in his right hand, a few inches in front of his mouth. Thus covered, the performer moistens the back of the right-hand card with the tip of his tongue.

Now when the cards are put together they stick together. One more has apparently passed. But no attempt is made to take it from the pocket.

The double card, held as one, is apparently placed in the left hand from which it vanishes. The right hand, palming the last two cards, goes into the trousers pocket and slides the cards apart, bringing out one of them. This card is placed in the left hand. The right goes back to the pocket again and brings out the second, and last, card.

Note the many and varying applications of principles. Anticipation is used in planting the first three cards. The left hand, containing nine cards, simulates twelve. Dissimulation is used in turning the pocket inside out, even though the cards are there. Every time the cards are false-counted simulation is employed. A maneuver is used to palm off the three cards while the spectator takes the card from the pocket.

This acts as a diversion of attention from the hands while they are securing the cards. The presence of the dollar in the pocket makes possible the ruse of reaching into the pocket for it, thus covering the depositing of the next three cards. The left hand dissimulates as it palms off the next three cards from the six just counted. A ruse is employed when the hand goes into the pocket with the palmed cards, apparently to show the pocket empty. The failure of the next two cards to pass, and apparently finding them at the shoulder, diverts suspicion from the pocket. This variation is a combination of anticipation and simulation.

The finding of the Spade under the vest is the distraction that permits the card to be thumbed from the pack in the left hand. Showing the two remaining cards is a ruse to permit one of them to be moistened secretly. Dissimulation is employed in showing the two cards as one. Simulation is used in making it appear that the card is placed in the left hand. And the right dissimulates while it carries the cards to the pocket. Taking the cards out singly diverts attention from suspicion that they might have gone in there together.

There are many other examples of these stratagems present during the performance of this trick, examples brought into operation by posture, facial expression, the eyes, the hands, movements and the like. Constantly, the expert deceptionist must

avail himself of these powerful weapons against the minds of the spectators. If he does not, he ceases to be expert. In fact, it is quite possible that he would even cease to be a deceptionist.

Notice that in the above three detailed examples nothing but the principles of psychological deception has been used. There has been no tricked apparatus of any kind.

But the psychological attack is fully as necessary with a completely mechanical trick as with one that is entirely nonmechanical.

A girl is hypnotized and placed upon a couch. Taking a position immediately behind the couch, the performer makes magnetic passes above her body. Slowly the body rises. Meanwhile the performer continues the mesmeric motions. The magician picks up a hoop and passes it back and forth, completely around the girl's body. Then the girl slowly floats back to the couch, and she is awakened.

There is psychological deception applied before the levitation begins. The couch, which conceals a steel cradle and gooseneck arm, is disguised to appear quite guileless. When the girl is hypnotized of course, this is merely sham hypnotism—it is a ruse to disguise the real reason why the subject must lie rigid. Also, hypnotism suggests some abnormal power at work.

The performer disguises the real reason he stands behind the subject. Apparently he stands there in order to make the mysterious motions which seem necessary to accomplish the levitation. Actually, he is there to conceal and cover the presence of the steel shaft that comes up through the floor and engages the gooseneck arm. This gooseneck arm, now quite familiar to most magicians, is attached to the lifting shaft, sweeps closely around the body of the magician, and is affixed to the cradle upon which the girl lies.

Certainly the mysterious waving of the hands is not necessary. The girl would rise, providing the mechanism were operated, without the passing movements of the performer's hands., As a matter of fact, if the girl were to shoot up in the air some two or three feet, remain there while the hoop was passed over her body, then drop back to the couch again, deception would fly apart. The spectators would know that some mechanism, even though cleverly concealed, was hoisting the girl about.

But that mysterious waving of the hands suggests and induces a power more intangible than mere mechanics. Even the slowness of the movement of the rising body simulates a magnetic-like attraction. Notice that the direction of the force is suggested. The hands seem to be pulling her up. If the force were a repellent one, the hands would have to be below the girl's body. This diverts attention from the real direction of the actual force.

The magician dissimulates when he passes the hoop across the floating girl. He dissimulates to conceal the fact that the movement of the hoop is restricted. He diverts attention from the hoop sufficiently to prevent the spectators from realizing that its passing is not completely natural.

And at the end, attention is diverted from the couch, where a considerable portion of the mechanism remains. Attention is diverted to the girl while she is apparently being brought from her trance.

Any normal intelligent human is capable of acquiring the dexterity necessary to execute even the most difficult of sleights in a technically flawless manner. This is merely a matter of correct training and sufficient practice. The backhand palm and the side steal are no more difficult than any other feat of jugglery. All possess that dexterity to a certain degree. It is merely a matter of habit, rhythm, timing and certain physical movements for which proficiency has been developed. Such moves are puerile compared to the dexterity necessary in becoming a good pianist, or particularly, a good violinist,

Operation of any mechanical trick is simple in the extreme. There is a certain procedure and routine of action necessary. If the necessary things are done, with the proper objects, at the proper time, the mechanism of the trick will work, except for accident or mechanical failure. Operating a mechanical trick is not as difficult as operating an automobile. Both are mechanical. But the operation of the automobile, through the hazards of encountering other cars, through the split-second timing necessary, through the emergencies, which constantly arise—often with financial loss, injury, or even loss of life at stake—presents a much

more difficult and exacting skill.

But executing a sleight and operating a mechanical trick are but the essential elements required *prior to* embarking upon deception. Those acts—the sleights and the operation of mechanical tricks—do not, and cannot, deceive. The psychological expedients and stratagems *added to them* cause the deception, not the sleights or the mechanical devices.

Show me the sleightster whose misdirection is not better than his sleights and I will show you a poor magician. Show me the performer whose misdirection is not more profound than the secrets concealed in his apparatus and I'll show you a poor deceptionist.

I have one more example of misdirection I would like to discuss. We used it in *The International Magicians In Action*. It occurred in *Murder In A Telephone Booth*. The trick is fully described in *SHOWMANSHIP FOR MAGICIANS*.

It was necessary to exchange the performer playing the part of the judge for another person. The whole illusion was one of transformation of identities. The judge was attired in wig and robe. When he took his place, he picked up a newspaper, spread it open and proceeded to read it. During rehearsal someone thought of substituting a sheet of comics, which was better.

During the action a girl had been followed by a thug. The girl fled to a telephone booth. The thug followed her and, opening the door just far enough to admit his arm, he stabbed her repeatedly. But the body was not seen. The only evidence the audience had been given was her repeated screams as the thug committed the crime.

Since we had to divert attention from the judge in order to make the exchange of people, we used the moment the telephone booth door was first opened after the murder as the diversion for effecting the change. So when the door was opened, the substitute judge, who had crept behind the judge's bench, took the newspaper in his hands—it was being held in front of the judge's face—came up behind it, while the original judge sank down out of sight.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

All that has gone before in this work points to a fact that must be realized by every magician sooner or later. Knowledge of this fact is the difference between being magically sophisticated and magically naive. The execution of a sleight, unrefined with misdirection and psychological conviction, is not deception. The performance of a mechanical trick, like the operation of a steam shovel, by pushing and pulling levers, without attacking the object of the trick with weapons that probe deeper than the mere perceptions, is not only poor magic. It is simply not magic.

In true deception, skill is not skill of the hands. It is skill of the mind. The important thing—I mean the supremely important thing—is not the control of your hands. It is not the control of your apparatus.

It is your control of the spectator's mind.

That, and that alone, is the one indispensable skill. Without it, the man who does tricks—sleight-of-hand or mechanical—is a mediocre demonstrator of puzzles, probably more often unsuccessful with his blunderings than successful. With it, the performer becomes a skillful magician, dependent neither upon sleights nor mechanical apparatus. With the acquirement of skill in controlling the spectator's mind, the magician needs nothing but his mind and, to a lesser extent, his two practiced hands.

It would be far better for magic and magicians if we could lock up or banish those blundering goofs who spend from ten cents to ten thousand dollars for apparatus and immediately tell the world they are magicians. They are no more magicians than the man whose sole claim *to* musicianship is the price of a violin. Unfortunately, the unskilled possessor of magical apparatus can buy a rabbit-in-the-hat pin, which is in fact more nearly the badge of the tyro than it is of the skilled performer more tyros than experts wear them. He may buy his pin and tell the world he is a magician. He may even get out his junk and fumble through a performance. But does the spectator as readily detect a lousy magician as he does a poor musician? Of course, not. When a fiddle sounds terrible, even the operator of the fiddle knows it. The auditors do not blame music. They blame the performer.

But in the case of magic if the performer is poor, the poor unfortunate is the dupe of his own ignorance. He does not know he is terrible. Perhaps even his spectators may not know it. Perhaps the spectators think, as so many have concluded, that all magic is bad. Therefore, this stupidly blundering character, they may assume, is merely exhibiting that which characterizes all magic.

That is why I say these people do magic more harm than the really skillful performers can repair.

I must insist—regardless of whether you are a top salesman, president of a public utility corporation, principal of a school or what not—the first requirement, even before you know how to operate your apparatus or do your sleight, is to understand the psychology of deception. There are no exceptions. Top salesmen are not excepted. Utility corporation presidents are not excepted. Principals of schools are not excepted. No one is excepted, professional or amateur.

The psychology of deception is the first requirement. There is no skill in deception possible without knowledge of misdirection. Without such knowledge, no one—regardless of who he may be—should ever try any trick anywhere at any time. Without such knowledge, the wearer of the rabbit-in-the-hat pin would better lock up his toys and throw the key away. Then, he will not betray himself for what he is—a deluded egotist. He will remain a much more respectable citizen in the eyes of the community.

All of this leads to the fact that the performer must study his tricks. He must dissect his presentation carefully to discover the weak points—to find where these tricks lack conviction. He must try to classify the type of misdirection needed in each case.

He must determine the position in which he will be when it is advisable to resort to an expedient. This means the position of the body, the hands, and the head. It means, also, the expression on his face. He should make a list of several natural, plausible movements he may make, or things he may say to lead into or accomplish the thing that will cover the move to be concealed. These should be skillfully chosen, ingeniously devised. They should be studied carefully and rehearsed painstakingly.

The magician must be sure of himself. He must be certain of his moves, what he is to say, and—above all else—he must be sure what he plans to do is plausible, natural, convincing and consistent.

If the person in question knows he cannot act, if he cannot speak lines, if he is not sufficiently ingenious to devise his own misdirection expedients, he should not try tricks requiring these qualities. Failure will merely ruin tricks that another performer can use. It is better for him to buy a collection of mechanical tricks—that is, if he *must* do tricks. Then, and this should be written into the laws of the land, he should give as few performances as possible.

It does not seem practical to attempt an extensive list of misdirection stratagems on individual tricks and situations here. The field is too big and the tricks are too many.

There are few effects or moves that do not require misdirection of some kind. Passes, changes, substitutions, and moves with apparatus—practically everything—must be investigated carefully, as the individual himself performs them. Proper misdirection must be devised to cover the weak places. The performer must not close his eyes to a weak place. The situation must be met and mastered, or the performer has failed.

Misdirection is not alone used to cover weak spots, as has been stressed here again and again. It is also used to insure the spectator obtaining the interpretation which best suits the purposes of the magician. These psychological expedients attack the spectator's understanding in many ways and for many different purposes.

Having a new trick to routine, the magician is confronted with the general effect and the sleights and moves necessary for its accomplishment. But he is also confronted with factors in psychological disguise and disguised control of the spectator's attention. He is confronted with making these disguises seem natural and convincing, because only in this way will deception be effective.

He examines the properties with which he is to work. If the objects are ordinary-appearing and plausible, he can pass along to other considerations, for the properties are self-protecting. But if these are out of the ordinary, it may be necessary to devise some method of diverting attention from them. Perhaps the spoken lines may be arranged to take care of this. But if the apparatus cannot bear much scrutiny, it is imperative to devise something to take the attention from it completely.

Such apparatus might be prepared lemons, trick decks, and double handkerchiefs, special tumblers or pitchers, prepared ropes, trick hats and the like. These may look unsuspicious and may be able to stand perfunctory inspection. But prolonged scrutiny might be disastrous.

In such cases, the performer may show the object and accompany the act with a diversion. This may take the form of an unexpected remark, a humorous explanation of how the object was acquired by the performer, or some ridiculous bit of by-play. The performer is careful not to betray that this diversion is planned. It must seem spontaneous, unpremeditated and natural. There should be no betrayal of anxiety. Above all else, the magician should say nothing or do nothing that he would not otherwise say or do naturally, if the article were actually ordinary.

Particularly, as pointed out before, he would not call the glass an "ordinary", or "unprepared" glass. When a person asks for a glass of water at home or in a restaurant, he does not say, "May I have an unprepared glass of water?" Neither would he order "an ordinary egg, hard-boiled."

All of this must be considered from the viewpoint of the spectator. Suspicions should never be concentrated upon something that the spectator is accustomed to accept without suspicion. If the article is unprepared, nothing is accomplished through the spectator's suspicions. But if the article is specially prepared, suspicion created in connection with it will be ruinous to the deception. Undue emphasis, which creates suspicions, is unnatural in connection with common, everyday things.

Success in diverting suspicion from an ordinary appearing, but specially prepared, article is entirely dependent upon handling it and talking about it—even thinking about it—as if it were really ordinary.

Those things which do not appear ordinary may include artificial eggs, imitation lemons, handkerchiefs concealing a bundle, key rings, arranged decks, tricked glasses, boxes with secret compartments and many other objects used by the magician. They include not very plausible imitations of the real thing. They also include properties that are frankly intended for magical purposes, such as conventional magical apparatus.

Mere diversion is not always sufficient here. All that has been said about consistency, convincingness and naturalness must be observed here. If the qualities of physical and psychological disguise are weak, strong attention control is necessary. Such weak qualities are poorly concealed secret compartments, poor mechanical provisions of any kind, poor simulation or dissimulation. The weak qualities could also include awkward maneuvers or ruses necessary in operating the device.

Where the physical and psychological methods of disguise are effectively applied, attention control need not necessarily be so positive or complete.

Mere diversion is not always sufficient here. All that has been said about consistency, convincingness and naturalness must be observed here. If the qualities of physical and psychological disguise are weak, strong attention control is necessary. Such weak qualities are poorly concealed secret compartments, poor mechanical provisions of any kind, poor simulation or dissimulation. The weak qualities could also include awkward maneuvers or ruses necessary in operating the device.

Where the physical and psychological methods of disguise are effectively applied, attention control need not necessarily be so positive or complete.

An example of how attention may be diverted from an implausible property might be illustrated in the case of a cup fashioned to vanish a quantity of liquid. It is desired to divert attention from the cup because it is not cleverly disguised. The prepared cup may be held in the left hand, with a pitcher of water being in the right. The cup is exhibited, but attention is immediately directed to the pitcher. The performer spills some liquid accidentally. Naturally he puts down the cup to take care of the difficulty.

In another case, a poorly faked lemon or orange is shown. Showing an abnormally large knife immediately follows this. Or the knife might be ridiculous in shape or completely incongruous—perhaps a Turkish scimitar, produced from a purse. Perhaps the performer asks his assistant to time him. The assistant pulls back his sleeve to reveal a, wristwatch the size of an alarm clock.

Or the performer might, in handling a bundle of silks concealing a heavy load, so handle another object in the opposite

hand that suspicion would instantly fall upon it. This might be nothing more than showing a hat empty in such a way that the spectators would suspect that there was something in it.

It is interesting here to note that the performer can concentrate attention upon this hat by referring to it as "ordinary," but giving the spectators very little opportunity to see that it is so. Such attention is built up until the object from which attention has been distracted is forgotten. Then the spectator's suspicions are dispelled in connection with the hat by showing it unmistakably empty.

In cases of tricked glasses, boxes with compartments, poor imitations and the like, it is well for the performer to distract attention from them almost immediately by picking up something more suspicious in appearance, as he shows the former. The thought here is that, while he shows the weak article, the spectators' attention certainly will be directed largely to the other one.

Sleights or moves used in the operation of a trick vary in the degree of disguise they afford. Just as in the case of apparatus, attention control is necessary where the disguise is weak. Some moves are invisible. Others may be physically covered. Still others are visible and must be done in the open.

No attention control is necessary where the move cannot be seen. But the greater part of the moves a magician makes must be made visibly and out in the open. In this case, any or all of the expedients discussed in this work may be adapted to the special circumstances and applied.

The side steal may be covered with a sudden turn to the right, as the performer says to a spectator, "Please think of your card," He must *see* him, the performer's every movement and expression being *exactly* the same as they would be if he were not doing the sleight.

In the case of moves like ring switches, both hands are usually occupied. This, then, requires that all diversion or distraction be accomplished through what the performer says or through his facial expression. However, perhaps the move might be disguised, thus eliminating the need for attention control.

The count and the apparent separability of each ring depends upon the quality of the performer's dissimulation. Linking moves, where the key is not used, rely upon the simulation of linked rings or upon maneuvers or ruses that permit joined rings to be substituted for the separated ones. Sometimes diversions or distractions are employed to take attention from exchanges. Anticipation and confusion enter into the trick. Expedients of varying kinds are utilized to secure a concealed key ring.

Let us assume the performer has a new trick to prepare for presentation. He carefully analyzes it with critical appraisal of its deficiencies in deception. He weighs the quality of the physical disguises incorporated. He considers the suitability of the psychological disguises suggested by the inventor. Where the trick seems weak, he improves the physical disguises. He also improves the psychological disguises as much as possible.

After the improvement, if the physical and psychological disguises seem sufficiently strong, perhaps he will need to consider little in the way of attention control expedients. Ordinarily, several strong artifices in attention control will be required.

At any rate, he knows whether any of the principles we have been discussing should be used. He tentatively adopts several expedients of varying kinds. He provides strong examples of distraction where either type of disguise is ineffective. Perhaps he also develops a number of diversionary ideas for each place in the trick where, although not weak, the quality of disguise is not impregnable.

Suitable verbal accompaniment is arranged for each successive detail in the presentation. This may be influenced partly by principles of showmanship and partly by principles of deception. Where the lines and the associated business are part of the misdirection, they must be carefully integrated and coordinated, word for word and movement for movement.

Now he "walks through" the trick, not attempting to perform it. But he works out the action as if he were capable of performing a genuine miracle. He does not now resort to any of the various artifices discussed. He picks up the properties,

handles them, and carries on the necessary verbal accompaniment. This gives him somewhat of the spectator's aspect of the trick.

Then, he goes through the routine a second time. This time he actually performs it. He notes where successful operation requires him to do something at variance with the first version. These places are the unnatural spots. They must be made to appear natural to the spectator. Something must be devised in the way of disguise to make these moves seem natural and unpremeditated. If he is unable to disguise these spots, he will have to employ attention control so they will be unnoticed by the spectators.

Particularly, he must be certain that the talk and business accompanying all forms of misdirection—whether disguise or attention control—are smooth, plausible, convincing and natural. He must overlook no opportunity to make this part as perfect as possible.

The same misdirection expedient must never be used twice in the same program. This is even worse craftsmanship than doing the same trick twice.

In using misdirection, whether of the disguise or attention control type, you are deceiving the spectator's understanding thr6ugh the five senses—seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, or smelling. The two perceptive senses most commonly used are those of sight and hearing. Rarely is the sense of smell important in magic.

A hollow ball, representing a solid ball, deceives the sense of sight. How this ball is handled deceives or fails to deceive the understanding, through the sense of sight. Should this hollow ball be dropped, and should a solid ball be dropped off stage simultaneously, the sense of hearing is deceived. But the spectator's understanding still must be influenced by making the substitute sound seem natural for the circumstances surrounding the ball in sight.

Occasionally, the sense of taste is deceived in such tricks as the cocktail trick. Yet the perceptive sense, alone, certainly is not sufficient here. Even though both sight and taste support the claim made by the deceptionist, it is necessary that the performer suggest what the drink is, in some manner—directly or indirectly. Merely to pour the drink and allow the spectator to sample it is insufficient. Nine times out of ten the spectator would fail to identify the drink. In fact, the drink is not actually what the performer claims it to be. It is merely a substitute. All authentication is supplied by the performer, who skillfully works upon the spectator's understanding through psychological expedients.

Similarly, in many tricks such as *The Half Dollar In Glass*—where a glass disc is used—or in the trick where a handkerchief is used to vanish a folded banknote, or in some phases of *The Sponge Ball Trick*, the sense of feeling is deceived *when influenced by what the magician says and does*.

Finally, and fundamentally, I believe it can be said that good deception is entirely a matter of acting. *Misdirection*, it must be realized, *is acting—good acting—and nothing else*. This acting is planned in such a way that what the performer does, how he looks, and what he says—all of these, and more—all cooperate in strengthening disguise and in controlling attention. Through this acting, the things a magician does seem natural, plausible, reasonable, convincing. They seem this way, even though the spectator knows them to be quite the opposite.

MAGIC
By
MISDIRECTION

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Of course, so far in this work, you have only my personal opinion to depend upon relative to the importance of the psychological attack. Certainly I should not blame you if you were to demand more substantial assurance.

So, because of this, I am going to cite you a few merely a few from the many, mind you—supporting statements which will confirm some of the ideas set forth here.

That the performer must, himself, believe as he wishes the spectator to believe is corroborated by Robert-Houdin. He has said, "*Although all one says during the course of the performance is—not to mince the matter—a tissue of falsehoods, the performer must sufficiently enter into the part he plays, to himself believe in the reality of his fictitious statements. This belief on his own part will infallibly carry a like conviction to the minds of the spectators.*"

Robert Houdin has also said, "*Nothing should be neglected which may assist in misleading the minds of the spectators*." Note that he selected the *minds*, not the senses.

It is an old familiar rule in magic that the performer should never reveal in advance what he intends to do. This has been stated and restated many times. Robert-Houdin said it in somewhat different language.

Why?

Because it clearly indicates to the spectator the path along which his attention should proceed, if he knows in advance what the magician is to do.

Almost as important, in my opinion, would be an admonition not to indicate precisely *when* you intend to do a thing. This precaution seems necessary to conceal the point at which the spectator should concentrate his attention. Under this circumstance —knowing when the thing is to be done attention control would be almost impossible.

Many years ago H. J. Burlingame published a book entitled *HERRMANN THE GREAT*. The introduction to this book, subtitled *Psychology of the Art of Conjuring*, has an exceptional discourse similar in subject matter to the substance of this present work.

One pertinent sentence stands out particularly: *What makes prestidigitation the art of deception, is not the technical*

outward appearance, but the psychological kernel. Further along may be seen this line: "*The main secret of all prestidigitateurs… lies in the power to direct the thoughts of the audiences into such a groove that a solution of the trick seems for the moment the natural result of artificially underlying causes.*"

Finally, in support, I can do no better than to bring in Nevil Maskelyne, who, many years ago, said in *OUR MAGIC*, "*Modern magic deals exclusively with mental impressions*." While I cannot agree with Mr. Maskelyne's ultimate conclusions, as expressed in that work—particularly in his chapter on misdirection—I think he intended to say more than he did. The quotation above makes it clear to me that the spectator's ultimate impression was a mental one, in his opinion. But I must confess failure to find this specifically confirmed.

Indeed, Mr. Maskelyne actually said, "*The misdirection which forms the groundwork of magic does not consist in telling lies, with the object of deceiving the spectator's* ***intelligence****. It consists, admittedly, in misleading the spectator's* ***senses***." The word *intelligence* was italicized in the first sentence, and *senses* was similarly stressed in the second.

> LINOTYPE OPERATOR'S NOTE.—Perhaps just a backhand statement meaning: Do not state "This is just an ordinary glass" if you wish your audience to consider it as such; rather, treat it as though ordinary and the spectators will take it for granted that it is ordinary until too late to concentrate upon it.

I understand this to mean that Mr. Maskelyne believed the senses, not the intelligence, to be the ultimate goal of the magician's deception. I do not think it conveys his true opinion. How can one reconcile this understanding with the sentence quoted in the third paragraph above? There he made it clear that magic deals with mental impressions.

Frankly, I am convinced it can deal with nothing else.

And, speaking of intelligence, many magicians are inclined to underestimate the intelligence of their spectators. This is a delusion that can only result in disaster to the deceptionist. Generally, spectators are quite competent mentally. Modern living conditions are not conducive to prosperity for the intelligently deficient.

Underestimating the intelligence of the spectator can only result in disaster for the deception. The only safe course for the magician is for him to realize that his spectators are fully his mental equals—perhaps, even, his superiors. It is extremely possible.

Partly because of this dangerous spectator intelligence, and partly because the path to follow has been definitely pointed out, the ancient rule of never repeating the same trick is still eminently valid. Of course, this does not mean the same effect may not be repeated, if a different method is available. What it does confirm is that the difficulty of deception is markedly increased simply because the original factors of disguise and attention control are largely rendered impotent.

Might I repeat myself in conclusion?

The magician's ultimate objective should be the *mind* of the spectator. His chief task is to insure that the spectator's mind receives the interpretation the magician intends it to receive. He accomplishes his purpose through dexterous, skillful and intelligent mixtures of truth and disguise and attention control. With discriminating applications of the factors of mental deception, the magician needs little else. Without them, no repertoire of sleights and no collection of apparatus is sufficient to deceive.

Consider the professional card sharper. Even as a magician considers himself a deceptionist, the sharper is more so. After all, when the magician fails to deceive, he merely spoils a trick. At most his reputation as a magician suffers. But when the sharper fails to deceive the penalties he suffers are dire. Of course, his means of livelihood are jeopardized. This would hold true of the professional magician as well. But it is not so valid in the magician's case because his deceptions are merely secondary to his entertainment accomplishments. It is possible for the magician to be a completely satisfactory entertainer, even when all of his deceptions fail. Thus, even his livelihood may not suffer.

But the sharper's case is different. Deception is vital to him. It is vital to his livelihood. But it is more vital to his physical well—being. You know, of course, that the sharper's audience is much more critical than the magician's. The witnesses of a sharper's failure are much more violent in their reactions when the latter's deceptions fail.

Without much doubt to me, John Scarne is the world's most adept practitioner in the craft of the sharper. John is one of my best friends. I have spent many hours with him, over extended periods of time. During these times I have seen him do almost unbelievable things with his hands, things which he has shown to few people, things which many experts, even, would never dream could be done. I as sure you, John can do them. Many of these things he has taught me. Many more, however, he showed me which were utterly impossible for my hands to accomplish. As a matter of fact, much of Scarne's repertoire can be done only by one man. Of course, that man is Scarne.

Perhaps one might think that close acquaintance with an expert of his caliber would result in learning much in the field of card handling, as an example. Yes. That is agreed. But that is not the chief thing one learns from Scarne. It is not the important thing.

From John Scarne, principally, one learns the importance of the psychological principles of deception. The first thing that is learned is that deception depends entirely upon doing things in such a manner that it seems there is no attempt at deception. Any suspicious movement or handling that is away from the normal, natural mode entirely destroys the deception. This is true, even if the spectator does not know precisely what the deceptionist has done.

All of the important things John Scarne does with his hands are done in a perfectly natural, normal manner. That is why so many of his moves are exclusively his own.

I agree that Scarne's hands are probably the most skilled, with cards, in the world. But he is entitled to more important distinction. I think John Scarne is one of the world's greatest experts in the practical application of the psychology of deception. With his skill in deception, his skill of hand makes him the master he truly is. Without his skill at deception, the things his hands can do would be useless.

I have not asked him his opinion on this, but I am certain he will agree.

Look at the lengths to which the sharper will go to maintain this atmosphere of naturalness and normality. Consider the care with which he disguises the things be uses and the things he does—both physically and psychologically. Notice how, when disguise is impossible, he utilizes the principles of attention control. He is a deceptionist. It is vital that his deception remains effective. He must maintain his deception even under the closest and most unfriendly scrutiny. When the chips are down, and when his very life depends upon the success of his deception, the sharper does not primarily rely upon sleight-of-hand moves or special apparatus. No. His reliance and confidence—and well being—are supported and maintained, first, by skillful applications of the principles of the psychology of deception. And when he fails, he has failed only because the deception has broken down through defective application of these principles of psychology. Nothing else can fail him. These, alone, are the things upon which he relies. These alone are the things upon which he risks his life.

Any confidence man—in any field of endeavor—where successful deception is vital, places his principle reliance upon nothing but skillful application of spectator deception through psychology. These men—these sharpers and other confidence men —are deceptionists, just as magicians are deceptionists. But more depends upon their deception. They do not dare to fail.

Is it not convincing that these men depend almost wholly upon their ability to successfully interpret for the spectator? Is it not convincing that, through disguise and attention control, they rely almost entirely upon skillful applications of psychology? Is it not convincing that they have little faith in mechanical assistance?

Believe it or not, these are the real secrets of deception. These are the real secrets of magic. With them, there is no limit to what may be accomplished in deception. These secrets cannot be exposed because, as I have pointed out before, there is no way of knowing when they are being applied, if the performer is skillful.

Now, perhaps, more magicians will realize them.

A great renaissance in the methods of magicians took place with the reforms commonly credited to Robert-Houdin. Formerly, magicians relied chiefly upon strictly mechanical methods. Robert-Houdin broadened the field of magicians' methods to include both mechanical and psychological principles. He discarded the more crude of the mechanical methods and added psychological subtleties.

I feel that another reform is now in progress. It is a reform consistent with a higher level of education and intelligence on the part of the magician's audience. I am certain that we are witnessing the gradual discard of the frankly mechanical and the frankly magical. Instead, I think that the "new", magic will be founded entirely upon psychological principles.

This does not mean, in my belief, that magical apparatus is to disappear. I am certain it does mean, however, that magical apparatus is in process of becoming extinct *as magical apparatus*. I feel that magical apparatus in the future will be disguised, ALL of it, to appear to be entirely non-magical and as something quite conventional and ordinary, as something with which the spectator is entirely familiar through everyday experience. It will be *disguised* magical apparatus.

I feel, too, that, more and more, mechanical methods will be discarded. In place of mechanical methods, the magician of the future will place his reliance upon psychological methods—methods such as those discussed in this work. It can't—and won't come all at once. This present—day renaissance must gradually evolve. Indeed I think it is gradually evolving right now. We are a part of it.

If this is true, it might be significant to observe that the methods of the magic of the future are discussed within the covers of this book. At any rate, I believe them to be the methods of the future. That is the direction I am taking personally.

Going my way?